

# RELIGION IN LIFE

## A CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY

Vol. X

Spring Number, 1941

No. 2

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Editorial correspondence should be addressed to RELIGION IN LIFE, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Business communications regarding subscriptions, etc., should be addressed to Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Entered as second-class matter January 16, 1932, at the post-office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. This number is the April, 1941, issue.

Subscription price, \$2.00 per year; postage free U. S. Possessions and Mexico; to Canada, 18 cents additional; other foreign postage, 30 cents; single copies, 75 cents.

For the convenience of readers in Great Britain, subscriptions will be received by The Epworth Press, 25-35 City Road, London, E.C.1, at the rate of nine shillings and sixpence per year.

Published by

ABINGDON-COKESBURY PRESS

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Printed in the United States of America

## What Is Church?

ARTHUR CUSHMAN MCGIFFERT, JR.

THE significance of punctuation for theology has not, I think, received sufficient consideration. I should like momentarily to assume the role of a theological grammarian and call attention to the punctuation of the Apostles' Creed. The third paragraph, which begins "I believe in the Holy Ghost," contains six phrases. In the Book of Common Prayer these phrases, with one exception, are separated by a half-stop, a colon. The one exception is the punctuation mark between "holy Catholic Church" and "communion of saints." Here the punctuation mark is a semicolon, a quarter stop. (Methodist printings of the Creed maintain a parallel distinction, using semicolons and comma.) The Apostles' Creed has not always been punctuated in this way. Like the Roman Catholic version of the Creed as given in Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, seventeenth-century Anglicanism, for instance, exhibits a uniformity in punctuation. The several phrases are divided, the one from the other, by the same punctuation mark.

What has happened to bring about the change in punctuation which in modern versions of the Creed equates "holy Catholic Church" with "communion of saints"? The change is no typographical error and oversight. It reflects a profound shift in theological point of view. My guess is that the taint of perfectionism, the recurrent will-o'-the-wisp of holiness implicit in Protestantism, has revolutionized creedal punctuation.

The matter goes deeper than grammar, of course. The effect of this equating of "Church" with "communion of saints" has been to befuddle the Protestant doctrine of the Church. If by "Church" is really meant "communion of saints," then the far from saintly, mundane, budgetary, Sunday-go-to-meeting institutions popularly known as the Church really aren't Church at all. Certainly these institutions are not the saintly object the Creed is referring to. They are therefore not the inevitable and legitimate subject-matter of theological attention. Instead of having to face the problem of Church as institution, theologians are free to try to figure out the meaning of that spiritual abstraction which goes by the name of the communion of saints, the congregation of the faithful, and leave to so-called

practical theologians the tough problem of the Church as institution. Small wonder that many of these "impractical" or pure theologians do not attend church! Why should they when they belong to the communion of the saints, which, if we may believe the punctuation marks, is the true Church?

This fallacious identification of the Church with the communion of saints, of which many Protestants are guilty, is matched by the Roman Catholic failure to distinguish between "Church" and "Kingdom of God." "The Church is the Kingdom of Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven" (*Augustine, Civ. dei*, XX, 9). To the Catholic the Church is God's answer to the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come." Romanists glory in the confident faith that God's sovereignty operates in the far-flung institution which submits to the Papal See. In it God's will is done. Beyond the holy Roman Church is no salvation, for God is inside, not outside, of it. It is an end in itself. It points to nothing beyond itself. The effect of these two opposite misconceptions of the Church is to leave the Church either unidentified (Protestantism) or uncriticized (Catholicism).

To be sure, the identification of the Church with the Kingdom of God, though misleading, has a partial validity which makes the identification seem plausible. It calls attention to the fact that religion has other than functional significance. The religious individual, to be sure, gives himself to a cause. He is an exorcist, a servant, a doer, a taker by storm of the Kingdom of Heaven. But such instrumentalism does not exhaust the meaning of religion. Religion offers analogies to applied science, no doubt, but it also partakes of the nature of pure science. Religion has its own way of saying Truth for Truth's sake and Art for Art's sake. The contemplation of God, His praise, rest in Him, enjoyment of Him, submission to Him: these are the activities of the religious man and they are antecedent to his ethical activities. The Church at worship is in so far the Kingdom of God, not because it is His will that we pay obeisance to Him but because in worship we are coming to terms with His will. But the Kingdom of God is at the same time distinct from, in the sense of being more inclusive than, as well as also futuristic in relation to the Church at worship. It is end rather than means.

On the other hand, the identification of the Church with the communion of saints, while misleading, also has a partial validity. Saints are exhibit A of the Church's activity as a worshiping, educating, forgiving, serving organization; and in turn they become the spiritual invigorators of

the institution of which they are a part. As the goal of the Kingdom of God points for the Church the direction in which the current of its life must flow, the saints set the high-water mark, to the level of which the tide of the Church's life may rise.

Just as the Kingdom of God is partly within and partly without the Church in the dimension of time, so the saints are partly in and partly outside the Church in the dimension of space. That is to say, not all of the saints are on the church rolls; the communion of saints is not limited to ecclesiastical membership. Theodore Parker voiced a necessary protest against the tendency of the Church as institution to insist that it is the exclusive channel of the work of the Spirit. Speaking tartly of the popular theology of his day in a volume entitled *Theism, Atheism and the Popular Theology* (1853, p. 148), he pointed out how all too often by theologians "the Holy Ghost is represented as going about seeking to inspire men with the will to be saved. [He is thinking of intrachurch activity.] He does not come into assemblies of men of science who are seeking to learn the laws of God. . . . It would be thought impious to paint the 'gentle spirit' coming down on a New England schoolhouse, where an intelligent young woman was teaching children the way they should go. . . . The Holy Ghost of theology has nothing to do with such things at all; nothing to do with schemes for making the world better, or men better." The long and the short of this quotation is that while Christianity may be identified with the communion of saints, the Church cannot be identified either with the communion of saints or with Christianity.

Churches are in fact just one of the aspects of the Christian movement. In the course of its history this movement has produced a multiplicity of creeds, codes and churches. Christianity is not to be identified with its creeds, though without creeds Christian people could give no account of the faith that is in them, of their resources, goals and sanctities. Christianity is not to be identified with its codes, though without codes Christian people would remain unselfconsciously and inarticulately moral, unable to reflect upon, criticize and reconstruct their ways of living. Christianity likewise is not to be identified with its churches, yet without churches Christian people would remain atomistic, orphaned, barren.

Owing to the incorrigible specialization of the intellect, however, each of these parts of Christianity is frequently treated as though it were the

whole. To the philosophical theologian Christianity is its creeds; ethics and ecclesiology are for practical theologians to deal with. To the ethical theologian Christianity is its codes or rather a code—a life of virtue, sensitivity and experimentation. To the ecclesiastical theologian Christianity is its churches or rather a Church—a social structure, an institution, an instrument of social control and venture.

We must probably accept as unavoidable the process of abstraction by which an undefinable whole becomes manageable through the understanding of its parts.

In his recent *Beecher Lectures* C. C. Morrison declines to accept the distinction I have drawn between Church and the Christian religion. He is an omnibus theologian. He bulges out the meaning of the word "Church" until it includes not only creeds and codes but becomes synonymous with the Christian movement itself or, as he prefers to say, the Christian community. "The Church is Christianity" (p. 67). He declares that it is superficial to conceive the Church as "a mere organization with specified officers and orderly forms of action and standards of belief." Having thus arbitrarily used the word "Church" for something for which a word or words already exist, he has to resort to the expedient of revamping another word to designate what in popular speech is commonly called the Church. His word is "sect," although he seems to prefer the clumsy device of writing Church as "Church" when he has in mind the institutional structures of Christianity.

Whatever else the Church may be, it is, according to the thesis of this paper, an institution. By institution I do not mean an established order or principle of procedure, nor an established habit of regulating human conduct in the attainment of a social end, such as the institution of marriage, government, language. In this sense of the word institution, religion itself is an institution. When I speak of the Church as an institution I define the Church more narrowly as "an organized society or body of persons with a fixed place of assemblage and operation, devoted to a special pursuit or purpose" (*Century Dictionary*). As an historic movement the Christian religion has shown itself prolific in its creation of such institutional structures.

The Church as an institution needs to be distinguished from other institutions. It differs from them in its origin, purpose and behavior. Every church has its particular arsenal of myths. There are the historic episcopate, baptism and other sacraments or peculiar rites, Bible, Jesus, creeds, liturgies.

By myth I mean here merely history invented or selected as an instrument of authority or self-justification.

The purpose of the religious institution which we call Church is by the instrumentality of such myths to organize people in terms of their decision regarding the sacred, of their acceptance of an absolute demand upon them, of their awareness of a post-mortem destiny, of their celebration of the possession of Bible, sacrament, code and creed, of their common loyalty to a universal Lord, of their voluntarily assumed disciplines, of their co-operative efforts to bring to bear upon themselves and others the sanctions and standards and resources of their faith.

As such, the religious institution or Church differs from institutions which are organized for commerce, art, education, amusement, research, health or transportation. All these deal with means. The religious institution specializes in ends and is continually transferring to other institutions responsibility for administering the means toward the chief end of man.

"Church," then, is a generic term for a conglomeration of organizations or institutions which have as their primary function the worship of God. These organizations own, rent or borrow property in which to carry on their activities. They are generally incorporated. Their business affairs are managed by a duly elected or self-perpetuating board of officers. Admission to membership and continuance in these organizations are determined by the organization itself according to various standards of discipline.

The Church exhibits the characteristics both of little and of big business. There are independent companies and chains (Congregationalists, Baptists, Disciples, et cetera); corporations (Episcopalians, Methodists); and holding companies (Roman Catholics). Like other organizations churches reflect somewhat the social trends in the secular world. At times the churches are fiercely competitive; at times they make combinations or trusts to prevent competition. The larger chains, business and ecclesiastical, are at the moment engaged in absorbing smaller chains; corporations are merging.

The analogy is admittedly imperfect, for Christianity has a unity which does not characterize business life. But the analogy serves to call attention to the fact that churches, like other social institutions, tend to follow social trends.

The trend toward ecumenicity in the churches is a sign of the times. Ecumenicity is of a piece with General Foods, General Motors, Interna-

tional Harvester Company. Within a year a "general" Church has been formed (The Methodist Church); and an "international" Church has been projected (The World Council of Churches).

Again, it must be acknowledged that there are deeper tides of the spirit flowing in the ecumenical movement than mere convenience. Indeed, the ecumenical churches, Protestant and Catholic, may prove to be among the few institutions that survive the present debacle.

The larger mercantile units have come into being, I have said, partly to avoid the devastating effects of the competitive system. They also seek to effect economy of operation in order to have a larger margin of gross profit from which to finance promotion, advertising, lobbies and the like; to provide powerful business leaders with instruments large enough to call forth the fullness of their powers. These business enterprises enlarge themselves at the cost of the autonomy of the coagulated or suppressed units.

In much the same way churches—I speak for America—combine to avoid ruinous competition (four churches in a row, rhyming with "so," easily become four churches in a row, rhyming with "how"). They combine to effect economies, to provide a more powerful spearhead of attack on entrenched evils, to create a supernational social structure in a time of desperate national divisiveness, and perhaps to offer competent executives a body of followers worthy of their powers of leadership.

A United Front is the order of the day, in business, in politics, and no less in religion.

At the very time, however, when these combinations are being effected, new organizations are springing up to take over the "markets" which chains and corporations have begun to neglect or for which they are too clumsy or careless to invent suitable spiritual merchandising methods. I mean the holiness cults: Assemblies of God (150,000 members in 1936); Church of the Nazarene (136,000); The Church of God, with headquarters at Cleveland, Tennessee; The Church of God, with headquarters at Anderson, Indiana; the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World; The Pentecostal Holiness Church; the Pilgrim Holiness Church; and many other smaller groups and individual organizations.

It must be acknowledged that churches which move in the direction of combination (whether organic or federal) do not always recognize the compulsion of their motions. What they talk about is John 10. 16 ("one flock")

or some similar text or tradition. Theologians write profusely in an authoritative vein about "the body" of Christ and His prayer that "all may be one" (John 17. 11), as though their action were prompted by such a text. Two comments are in order.

First, this prayer has been a part of the Christian tradition for a good many years, and years that included the competitive eras. It is quoted freely, however, and given authoritative prestige only in periods when there is a general social ground swell toward centralization.

Second, the reference to the body of Christ calls for special remark, which I offer somewhat diffidently because of the great amount of genuine fervor which the metaphor seems to arouse. Body is an admirable metaphor for the Church in so far as it points to the Church as a material social structure in all its concreteness and objectivity. A church which thinks of itself as body of Christ is unlikely to confuse itself either with the communion of saints or with the Kingdom of God.

On the other hand, the metaphor of the Church as body of Christ seems singularly inappropriate as an ecumenical slogan. Christ's body was a broken body. The present divided Church, split into denominations, Catholic and Protestant, might perhaps more accurately represent the broken body of Christ than any world-wide undivided institution. Indeed, the body of Christ which is the Church has never been anything but a broken body. There never has been *a* Church; there have always been churches. There is no "true" Church; there are many "real" churches. People who distrust and fear the behavior of power-groups incline to see something providential in the brokenness of the Church.

The problems presented to the theologian by the existence and persistence within the Christian movement of the Church are the problem of the relation of the individual to an organized social group, the problem presented by the tendency of organization to sink to the level of mediocrity and to become the victim of institutional habit, the problem of majority and minority groups, the problem of transforming ideologies, that is to say, creeds, to suit contemporary issues and modes of expression, the problem of adjusting the institution to other social institutions in terms of jurisdiction and allocation of power; and the like. In trying to solve these problems the social structures of Christianity (churches) define their standard as the communion of saints; their goal, as the Kingdom of God.

## Bergson—In Retrospect

CORNELIUS KRUSÉ

**O**N JANUARY 4th of this year there died in France one of the most celebrated philosophers of modern times. Less than a month before his death he had declined the offer of the Vichy government of exemption from the new regulation, no doubt demanded by the German authorities, that all Jews must resign state-held offices. Bergson was still the nominal incumbent of his chair at the Collège de France, though he had not lectured there since the outbreak of the last war, but he promptly resigned his honorary emeritus position as well as other honors in protest against the discriminatory legislation against members of his race. Those who have followed his brilliant career throughout his long life—he was over eighty-one at the time of his death—were not surprised at this last act of chivalry. This gesture of solidarity with the Jewish race becomes all the more striking in view of the fact recently made public by the wife of Jacques Maritain that he became converted to Catholicism a few years before he died.<sup>1</sup> Bergson as a man will long be remembered for his being a gentleman without fear and without reproach.

What of Bergson as a philosopher? Time was, in the years before the first World War, when his popularity in the *haute monde* became embarrassing to him, modest person that he was. The lecture room in the Collège de France, with backless fixed benches for seats, was thronged with fashionable ladies and gentlemen who thought nothing of sitting through a dry lecture in geology in order to be sure of hearing the divine Bergson. His students disposing of less time had to be content with standing room only. The general popularity of Bergson's finished lectures, the magic of his discourse, rich in imagery and crystal clear in analysis, hurt his reputation among his colleagues in philosophy across the street in the Sorbonne. The writer heard no mention of Bergson in any of his courses in the Sorbonne in the academic year 1919-1920, except a passing reference, intended to be depreciatory, by a professor of medieval philosophy who said: "All of

<sup>1</sup> Raissa Maritain, "Henri Bergson," *The Commonwealth*, Jan. 17, 1941, pp. 317-319.

Bergson that is of any value can be found in Plotinus.”<sup>8</sup> This was all the more disappointing since Bergson’s name and fame had been at first the chief reason for wishing to stay in France and since Bergson himself was no longer lecturing at the Collège. (I should add that he had a very able and ardent disciple as his “suppléant” at the Collège, Édouard Le Roy, the distinguished mathematician and one of the conspicuous leaders in the modernist movement among French Catholics.)

What the intervening years since 1920 have brought has been chiefly this: an exchange of general popularity for the increasing esteem of his philosophic colleagues. By 1937, Bergson had been unanimously elected honorary president of the Ninth International Congress of Philosophy in Paris, held in honor of the tercentenary of the publication of Descartes’ celebrated *Discours de la Méthode*. Not all philosophers today, it is true, find themselves in agreement with Bergson’s philosophy, but his contribution has definitely become a part of the great stream of the history of philosophy.

Henri Louis Bergson was born in the Rue Lamartine in Paris on October 18, 1859 (in the same year in which John Dewey was born in Vermont). His mother was English and it is said that his father was a Polish Jew. His whole education was Parisian. For ten years until he graduated (in 1878) he was a pupil at the famous Lycée Condorcet in Paris. During the next three years he was a student at the institution that prepares the professors of France, the celebrated École Normale Supérieure, an educational institution of great merit which recently has become prominent in French literature through the writings of Jules Romains. The great leader of the French Socialist Party, who was assassinated at the beginning of the first World War, Jean Jaurès, was a fellow student of Bergson’s throughout his course at the École Normale. From pictures of this period it becomes evident that Bergson once had abundant fair hair. He was always very fragile looking, displaying, to use an expression which William James applied to Josiah Royce, “an indecent exposure of forehead.” Bergson was in his student days shy and retiring, but exceedingly polite in his manners. Jaurès, on the other hand, seems to have been a man of large build and great energy,

<sup>8</sup> The professor was partly right. In an interesting letter to Horace Kallen, reported in part in the *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Method* for 1915 (p. 615), Bergson acknowledged his indebtedness to Plotinus which, strangely enough, he never mentioned in any of his books. Madame Maritain in her article in the *Commonweal*, already referred to, makes a valuable corroborating reference to Bergson’s interest in Plotinus.

loving nothing better than disputation. In his expansiveness and self-assurance Jaurès would talk with thundering eloquence, whereas Bergson spoke softly and with great refinement. We are told that they got on well together, but that their fellow students said of them, "Jaurès voit gros, Bergson voit fin."

Needless to say, Bergson was a very excellent student both in the secondary school and in the university. He later became a defender of the classics, to which he had devoted himself so thoroughly in the Lycée Condorcet. He felt that a thorough study of Greek and Latin emancipated the student from the tyranny of a single set of words, enabling him to center his attention on their inner meaning. In this respect he anticipated the findings of our Horace Bushnell to the effect that the more metaphors one used with reference to a designated thing, the better it would be, because irrelevances would by the diversity of metaphors be cancelled out and central attention would be given to the remaining core of meaning. At the École Normale of the University Bergson gave chief attention to science, particularly to mathematics and physics. He was in this period rather contemptuous of metaphysics with its inexactness, and was first and foremost a mathematician with even a definite inclination to mechanism. He was so successful in mathematics that he won a prize in it, and later when he turned to philosophy his professor of mathematics said to him sadly, "You might have been a great mathematician, now you will only be a philosopher. You will have missed your vocation." To his fellow students he seemed rather English-bred, owing perhaps to the fact that by predilection he read English philosophy. The British empiricists, John Stuart Mill and, especially, Herbert Spencer, meant much to him; whereas the German philosophy of Kant and the post-Kantian idealists hardly touched him.

After completing his work at the École Normale Supérieure, he took the state competitive examination, really an academic civil service examination, for the so-called agrégation. This is one of the most exacting examinations any candidate for a teaching position in higher education can submit himself to. There may be hundreds that apply and ten or a dozen who are accepted. The French educational system is so centralized that no one can teach in a state lycée or university who has not passed through this grueling examination. Bergson came out second in the country-wide competition for a teaching position in philosophy. Jaurès was third.

One of the peculiarities of the educational system in France is that young instructors begin their teaching not in universities but in the secondary schools and lycées, which correspond in our country to junior colleges. Neither is a young instructor ever assigned at once to a post in Paris. Paris is the center, the source and goal of all education, but young men must win their academic spurs usually far out on the periphery of France, possibly even in the colonies. Bergson, no doubt on account of his excellent record in the École Normale as well as in the examination, became first of all professor of philosophy at the Lycée of Angers in 1881. In a few years he was appointed to the Lycée of Clermont-Ferrand, situated in the town where Pascal had been born. But as early as 1888 the brilliance of Bergson was recognized by his being appointed to a professorship in Paris at the Lycée Henri IV, where he remained for ten years. In 1889 there appeared the thesis which he offered for his doctorate, with the title *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*. It is perhaps not so well known that the doctor's thesis in France is quite a different thing from the doctor's thesis in this country, no matter how difficult our graduate students may find the task as it is. The state doctorate as distinguished from the university doctorate, which was established after the first World War in order to have something comparable to the American and the German doctorate, is given only upon evidence of very original scholarly work. As a rule the doctor's thesis of the great professors of philosophy in France is a classic and often remains the best book that the professor has written. Bergson was to write other important books, but this dissertation is still essential to an understanding of Bergson and established his reputation at least in France. Not long afterwards Bergson was invited back to his own École Normale as a lecturer. In 1900 he became professor at the Collège de France. The position of a professor at the Sorbonne is important, but to be appointed to the institution founded by Francis the First, the Collège de France, is considered by most French professors as the supreme academic recognition. The Sorbonne through the years of its existence from the beginning of the thirteenth century until today has had, not always justly, a reputation for academic orthodoxy. The Collège de France, on the other hand, was established as an institution of freer instruction. It was a child of the Renaissance rather than of scholasticism. I was present at the home of Professor Émile Boutroux when his son Pierre, professor of mathematics at Princeton, had just arrived

in Paris in order to be inducted into his new appointment to a chair at the Collège de France. I could see from the joy that animated both distinguished father and son how much it meant to them for Pierre Bourdoux to have received this great honor.

Other honors came to Bergson. In 1901 he became a member of the Académie de Sciences Morales and in 1914 he was invited to become a member of the Immortal Forty of Richelieu's Académie Française. In 1928 he received the Nobel prize for literature. He came to our country several times. In 1904 he distinguished the World's Fair in St. Louis by his presence and his lectures. In 1913 he again delivered a series of lectures in this country. Shortly after the World War he came once more to the United States as president of the committee of the League of Nations for Intellectual Co-operation, a position he held until 1925 when he was obliged to resign on account of his increasingly poor health.

Shortly after the War, he and Einstein came together in Paris under the auspices of the Société Française de Philosophie. Though the parentage of Bergson was not French, he became naturalized as soon as he could, and he may be regarded as a typical French scholar. The coming together of these two distinguished scholars from countries but recently at war must have been a great event for the philosophical society in France in its promise of the solidarity of scholars the world over. Bergson's health, never robust, obliged him to cease all active instruction in 1918. He managed nevertheless to do some important writing and occasional lecturing after his relatively early retirement. Quite recently, in 1932, there appeared his great and long-expected book on ethics and religion, entitled *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*. It is interesting to note in passing that, while Bergson's lectures in the first decade of this century were events of the first importance in France, his books were not translated into English until after the publication of his *L'Évolution créatrice*, which William James hailed with this characteristic expression of delight: "O my Bergson, you are a magician and your book is a marvel, a real wonder in the history of philosophy."

I now wish to recapitulate in brief form some of the central doctrines of Bergson. One may say that Bergson's chief works are his doctor's thesis, *Matière et mémoire*, *L'Évolution créatrice* and *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, which latter work appeared just twenty-five years

after the famous *Creative Evolution*. In a very important letter to Père de Tonquédec Bergson wrote in 1911, summing up what he set out to do in the first three books, as follows: "The considerations set forth in my *Essai sur les données immédiates* culminated in making plain the fact of freedom; in *Matière et mémoire* I put my finger, as I trust, on the reality of spirit; in *L'Évolution créatrice*, creation is presented as a fact."<sup>8</sup> Bergson has always maintained, and it is in harmony with his theory of intuition, that every great philosophy has had but one *intuition-maitresse*, one master vision. While it becomes clear in reading the full gamut of Bergson's works, including his *Introduction to Metaphysics* and his penetrating book *Laughter*, that there is indeed one dominating idea in all his thinking from which there radiate all the richly varied ramifications of the rest of his doctrines, it is a little difficult to catch all this in a concept. One might say, for example, that his central idea is, like that of Heraclitus, that all is movement and change. Or one might say that Bergson is carrying out that part of Descartes' philosophy, since become traditional, which is indicated by Descartes' famous *Cogito, ergo sum*, stressing by this pithy statement the intimate and immediate source of all assurance of reality. Or one might say, as a corollary of the preceding, that in Bergson's thought the primacy of intuition is all important. Or, and writers like Professor Montague and Étienne Gilson would be in agreement here, one might select Bergson's doctrine of duration, *la durée réelle*, as being the most significant of all his teachings. Again, and now thinking of his *Creative Evolution*, one might say that central with him, and so much loved by William James, is the idea that evolution is not the unfolding simply of what was once given at the start, but the constant enrichment of life's creative act.

Whichever one selects as the central principle, all the rest emanates from it, for we are dealing with an organic philosophy in which change, duration, continued creation, intuition, real freedom, and novelty interpenetrate and support each other. In view of the fact that in popular thought about Bergsonism duration, while it is indubitably in the forefront of Bergson's thought, is most neglected, it might be wise to begin with that. Bergson means to contrast *la durée réelle* with the abstract time of mathematics or physics. One might say that the difference is between thick time and thin

<sup>8</sup> Quoted by Jacques Chevalier: *Bergson*, p. 247. The writer of this interesting book, an admirer of Bergson, happens now to be Minister of Public Instruction in France, a fact which throws much light on the recent official attitude toward Bergson, before and after his death.

time. The time of mathematics is infinitely divisible and, if "the incomparable Newton" is to be believed, flows on "equably without regard to anything external." Bergson utterly rejects this time as being anything more than a convenient abstraction. For him duration gets its first meaning from man's experience of lived time. Duration is that which happens, that which grows, and becomes enriched in its process, and not simply an empty river-bed down which events might pour. Abstract time, Bergson maintains with great acumen, is really a spatial interpretation of time. Recourse to clocks, which in one form or another give us but a translation of time in terms of space, is justifiable if one is aware that one is dealing with abstract symbols and not with true reality. Time, as we experience it in living, has a very rich intensity. To confuse it with space is to miss its meaning. One of Bergson's chief points of insistence, therefore, is that time, if it is to be taken seriously and retain its fluency, must be completely freed from space. This emancipation of time from space involves the exclusion of the view that time is reversible or that coming events are predictable. The modern *Existenzphilosophie*, which makes much of the fact that we live through time with fear and trembling, also agrees that time is irreversible, only Bergson's philosophy is in essence optimistic rather than, at least initially, pessimistic. (I may say in passing that in conversation with Heidegger in 1935 it became apparent that of all modern foreign philosophers Bergson was about the only one he read and respected.)

Another corollary of the dissociation of time from space, and this is of central importance for an understanding of Bergson's duration, is the abandonment of the attempt to atomize time into discrete instants. Bergson is an empiricist; if he had not had recourse to the doctrine of duration, all of reality would have been pulverized for him into separate experienced moments of time. He himself might have become, in Berkeley's phrase, but a system of free floating ideas. But the doctrine of duration asserts that it is impossible to cut off the past from the present or the present from the future. What many readers of Bergson even today do not realize is his great emphasis upon the continuously enduring quality of the *past*. The past is never really past, certainly not with living organisms, but is constantly being carried over into the present. It would be just as correct to call Bergson's philosophy a philosophy of the past as it is to call it a philosophy of the future. Bergson, of course, does not mean to crowd out freedom, quite the

contrary, in insisting upon the constant presence of the past, but he nonetheless maintains that we are only tricked by our practical memory when we feel that most of our past has disappeared. Our active memory, important only or usually for practical purposes, presents us with merely a very small part of what we have lived through; for everything that has been experienced by us, Bergson is convinced, is consciously or unconsciously an exceedingly important and enduring part of ourselves.

The singling out of duration for first treatment among the doctrines of Bergson is not only justified by the frequent neglect of this doctrine, at least in popular thought, but also by Bergson's explicit assertion of its priority in his own thinking. He wrote many years ago to the celebrated Danish philosopher, Harold Hoeffding: "The theory of intuition upon which you insist much more than upon that of duration became disengaged before my eyes only a long time after duration. Intuition is derived from duration and cannot be understood without it."

Bergson's doctrine of intuition, in its turn, is even today frequently misunderstood. He is usually classified as being an anti-intellectualist and sometimes even as a thinker who has, therefore, played into the hands of totalitarianism by his apparent rejection of the intellect and his great praise of life. Bergson, it is true, draws the sharpest distinction between the intellect and intuition. Along with James, who for this reason hailed him as a companion in arms, Bergson believes that life always bursts the confines of any concept which tries to enclose it. Intelligence and the intellect, he holds, arose in the process of evolution for practical purposes. It was this aspect of his seeming acceptance of pragmatism which both attracted and perplexed William James. Attracted him, because the instrumentalism of intelligence was recognized; perplexed him, because he realized that for Bergson there was something higher than intelligence. Bergson maintained that while an external observer could tell us much about ourselves, in the last resort the warmth and depth of our life, the true reality of it, is felt only by ourselves. Now everything, and particularly a living thing, has this peculiarity of having an inner reality besides something that is externally observable. Science deals with the public, with the sharable, with that which is equally observable by every competent outside investigator. This gives to science, as it does to practical common sense, a certain power over the reality known. But Bergson was not primarily interested in power; he was,

like his somewhat older contemporary, the mathematician Henri Poincaré, particularly interested in vision. Between us and reality a veil has been woven, he feels. "What fairy has woven this veil? Was it through malice or through kindness? It was necessary to life and life demands of us the apprehension of things in their relationships to our needs." But if we really wish to have the privileged view of real things, we must detach ourselves from the importuning, practical concerns of life and become, in our attempt to know reality, more like artists, who see and divine reality face to face through interest and sympathy.

Any person can quickly test for himself the great truth that Bergson here refers to, that any person, cause, or movement cannot really be known by anything short of intellectual sympathy. An alien religion, an alien race, an alien nation, an alien period of time, will not disclose its inner reality to a hostile or casual investigation. It is popularly said that love is blind; the reverse is nearer the truth: love or sympathy alone is clairvoyant. Amiel set down in his *Journal Intime*: "To understand is to have consciousness of the profound unity of the thing to be explained." This is in close agreement with Bergson's conviction that any true vision of reality can be effected only through appreciation and communion, if not through actual union, with that which is to be known. This doctrine, it is clear, comes very close in the realm of knowing to mysticism in religion and has, of course, its application in his last and final work on morals and religion.

But is Bergson, because of his insistence on intuition, therefore really antirational or anti-intellectualistic? It must be recalled that Bergson in his student days was an exceedingly brilliant student of mathematics. It must likewise not be forgotten that the most important single disciple of Bergson, his "remplaçant" and successor at the Collège de France, is the mathematician, Édouard Le Roy. We are not, therefore, dealing with a man hostile to the rationalism of mathematics or the natural sciences. The fact is that intuition may be infra-intellectual, as well as supra-intellectual. Bergson's intuition clearly represents the latter, and not the former. Bergson himself emphasizes in many places that "a precise and scientific knowledge of facts is a necessary precondition for the metaphysical intuition which penetrates to the heart of things."<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere Bergson uses this illustration (which I have somewhat Americanized): a man who has not attempted to

<sup>4</sup> *Vocabulaire de la philosophie*, by André Lalande, Paris, 1926, p. 402.

do the hard work of gathering facts and information on any given subject will, when the flash of intuition, invoked and expected, actually comes, resemble the pitiable little spurt of an explosion that children in the United States would associate with setting off left-over defective firecrackers on July 5th; it is only when by much effort a great deal of material has been gathered that the flash of intuition really causes a great and significant detonation. Any fair-minded person need only read Bergson's *Creative Evolution* to realize how complete and painstaking had been Bergson's acquaintance with the biology of his day when he wrote that memorable book. No, Bergson is not an antirationalist; he simply has demonstrated that the discursive intellect by itself cannot give us that full and complete vision that somehow comes upon us through long and loving acquaintance with a given subject. It may here be remembered that a philosopher of even greater importance than Bergson, and of the same race, reserved for the intellectual intuition, or as he sometimes called it, "the intellectual love of God," his third and highest type of knowing. It is furthermore instructive in this connection to recall that there was another great French thinker, a genius in mathematics and a physicist, who declared, "Le coeur a ses raisons, que la raison ne connaît pas."

The continuity of Bergson's thought can be seen in the fact that his central ideal of duration began with the description of man's profoundest experience of himself and then became extended to include all of reality. Duration applies to creative evolution as it does to man himself. Duration, he keeps insisting, is something which expands, becomes enriched, and creates itself indefinitely. This creative movement, as every reader of Bergson knows, is his *élan vital*. This vital impetus or upsurge is a power which across all the obstacles of matter by infinite resourcefulness moves along its creative way. Man is of course the highest accomplishment, thus far, of creative evolution, but the same creative power that has produced him can be seen elsewhere also. In his *Creative Evolution* Bergson again contrasted, as before, intuition with the intellect; but on the wider natural stage he now introduces the contrast between instinct and intelligence. Intuition, when successful, is a kind of bringing together, or synthesis, of the conscious power of the intellect and the unconscious assurance and deftness of touch of the instinct, especially as this latter is revealed in ants and bees.

What Bergson objects to fundamentally in all previous accounts of evo-

lution is the imputation that evolution is simply the unfolding of what is already present, so that in consequence whatever seems new is but appearance. Both mechanism and finalism fall into the same error of regarding all as given from the start. Time in this interpretation would cease to have the meaning and reality it has for Bergson in the life of the universe as well as in that of the individual. Because life is infinitely rich in inventiveness, whatever happens could even with the greatest amount of knowledge never have been predicted. Prediction is only possible when life has become habitual, that is, when life is running down to become matter.

The relationship between life and matter is one of the difficult problems in Bergson's thought. Through all of his philosophy there runs this parallelism of dualism and monism. Matter is contrasted with life, the intellect with intuition, man with the rest of the animal world; and in his most recent book on religion and morality dualisms, as we shall see, once more emerge. Yet any reader of Bergson will feel that frequently this dualism is not regarded as final. I have it on the authority of a personal statement made to me in London by Bergson's official translator and chief English interpreter, Professor H. Wildon Carr, that Bergson always *means* to be monistic. If that is true, then matter dare not be regarded as an entirely different metaphysical principle from life but as life become fatigued and yielding to the temptation of repetition, like that to which an artist yields, who having found one excellent mode of expression, tends to repeat himself when his spontaneous creativeness has faltered.

We come, finally, to Bergson's distinctly ethical and religious views. Before Bergson spoke for himself, many an article or a doctor's dissertation was written on what Bergson presumably would have to say if he should ever really complete his philosophical thinking to include the realm of ethics and religion. The publication of *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion* made it possible at last to compare Bergson's actual views with what had been predicted. What Bergson had to say about religion was prophetically anticipated by many previous writers, but much less so what he finally wrote about morality. Any person might well have inferred that a thinker who made so much of immediate experience and intuition would, if he ever turned his attention to religion, extol the mystic way of life. This indeed he does in his latest book. The mysticism of dynamic religion is here put in sharp contrast with the outer or static religion. The latter is external and institution-

alized, practically useful in overcoming the danger of the "dissolvent power of intelligence," which left to its anarchic tendency would disrupt social cohesion; and useful, too, in its myth-making power to defend man against the paralysis of fear that would otherwise overcome him when attentive to reason's forecast of death, and its depressing disclosure of the "margin of the unexpected between the initiative taken and the effect desired." Static religion, in short, keeps man from succumbing to egotism and pessimism. This first form of religion, with its myths as well as its rites and ceremonies, is, however, infra-intellectual, born of something like instinct. It has great social value, but is not yet true religion. Dynamic religion must await the coming of the great mystics who know immediately the God of love and reveal Him as such to men, in most of whose hearts, deep down, the mystic appeal finds at least the murmuring of an echo. Dynamic religion not only inspires in the mystic and his followers the love of God but, through God, the love for all men as well. Dynamic religion is disinterested, while static religion is utilitarian.

Morality also presents a dualism, namely, that of a "closed" and "open" society. Bergson has many excellent things to say about these two types of society. The closed society insists upon a double standard of morality, one mode of behavior applying to those within the race or nation-state, and the other to those on the outside. Closed societies are by social pressure strongly integrated within, but of necessity are always hostile to one another. In consequence, war is for them not only natural but inevitable. Now, the open society is the one where "there is neither Jew nor Greek," no barriers of any kind, and where there is but one morality that applies to all human beings. Such an ethics, contrary to the rule of conduct in closed societies, is not one of compulsion but of appeal, inspired by great mystics who show a new way and thereby through their very presence move the human heart to aspire to become like them. Contrary to much customary thinking that it is possible to advance gradually from a narrow, closed society to an ever widening one, Bergson maintains that the difference between the closed and the open society is one of kind or, one may say, a difference of fundamental spirit. Only through the love of God is it possible to reach the universal love of man. The open society can only result from the embrace of dynamic religion.

There is much in this great book which is still of greatest interest for

us today, particularly the references to the need of the religious undergirding of any universal morality. But there are a few things that I wish to touch upon briefly before concluding. In the first place, an unexpected note in Bergson's presentation of religion is his ranking of the mystics. We have seen previously that intuition, as distinguished from the intellect, is disinterested and not primarily practical. One might therefore easily have concluded that contemplative mysticism of the Eastern type would have been Bergson's ideal. The opposite is true. Eastern mysticism is for him, in contrast with Christian mysticism, incomplete. The Christian mystics did not content themselves with the joy of a beatific vision, but after the experience on the mountaintop proceeded creatively to make love prevail actively among mankind. In one sense there is in Bergson's praise of Christian mystics no matter for surprise, for this stress on the higher nature of active mysticism is of course in harmony with his usual praise of creativity. But nevertheless to at least this writer there is here a new note, which also came out in the letter Bergson sent to the Ninth International Congress of Philosophy, in which he recommended to philosophers that they should think like men of action, and act like men of thought.

In the second place, there remains of course the question as to how God is to be conceived in Bergson's thinking. Is God simply the *élan vital* in nature, or does God Himself create this vital impetus? When one goes through his book, there is found only one reference which would bring the *élan vital* explicitly together with God, and that is the following: the fulfilment of mysticism is communion with the creative effort which life manifests. "This effort is of God if it is not God Himself."<sup>6</sup> This reference is certainly not as decisive as one might wish. One is therefore all the more grateful for the recording of his views in his letter already referred to, written as early as 1911 to *Père de Tonquédec*. He was then referring, to be sure, to creative evolution. "From all this there issues clearly the idea of a God who is free Creator, the source alike of matter and of life, and whose effort of creation is continued, on the side of life, by the evolution of species and the constitution of human personalities. Hence, too, there issues the refutation of monism and pantheism as general principles."<sup>6</sup> This statement corroborates what friends of Bergson have maintained for a long time,

<sup>6</sup>P. 235.

<sup>6</sup>Quoted by Jacques Chevalier, *Bergson*, p. 247.

namely, that Bergson's God is indeed the God of prophetic Judaism and of mystical Christianity. It seems, however, that it was only by slow degrees that he came to this point of view.

Reference has been made before to Bergson's pervasive dualisms. Can the dualisms of the open and closed society, on the one hand, and the static and the dynamic religion, on the other, be resolved into a harmony? From numerous passages it becomes very clear that Bergson does not intend these antitheses to be definitive. His most characteristic view is that static religion is a running down of mystical dynamic religion, and every open society tends through a falling off of effort to become a closed society. But this view of lapsed creativeness, conceived, it appears, somewhat after the analogy of Plotinus' procession of emanation, is not consistently held to and remains, I am afraid, in Bergson's thinking an imperfectly mediated antithesis.

Nobody questions that Bergson was an influential thinker in the decades preceding and following upon the turn of the century. What of Bergson today? As was indicated before, while apart from Édouard Le Roy there is probably no direct disciple of Bergson, yet his influence continues to be considerable. In a very remarkable article appearing in the French weekly, *Les Nouvelles Littéraires, Artistiques et Scientifiques*, Étienne Gilson on the occasion of Bergson's eightieth birthday gives high tribute to Bergson's great influence upon all subsequent French thinking, whether antipathetic or sympathetic to Bergsonism. At the time when the Sorbonne was completely given over to a positivistic philosophy, he says with gratitude, Bergson opened up a new life to the young philosophers of the first decade of the twentieth century. When metaphysics had abdicated to positivism, it was Bergson who restored faith in man's quest after reality. The problem, he says, is not where, among French thinkers, are the disciples of Bergson but where are they not; and, one might add, not only in the field of philosophy, as a perusal of the writings of Proust would at once disclose. The reason, continues Gilson, why Bergson was so tremendously successful in France was that he restored the long-established French tradition of combining the intellectual with the intuitive. Since this appraisal is made by perhaps the best modern scholar of scholasticism, it is the more remarkable. All too frequently Bergson has been conceived as an ephemeral apparition upon the modern scene. It is therefore of great interest to find him acclaimed by Gilson as an enduring philosopher firmly

embedded in French traditional thought. In fact, Gilson goes so far as to say that only three times in its history has France become justly recognized by the whole civilized world as the "siège de la Sagesse": with Abélard in the twelfth century, Descartes in the seventeenth, and Henri Bergson in the twentieth.

If it were necessary to add to Gilson's claim that of other French colleagues, one need only turn to the homage addressed to him in the *Revue de Métaphysique et de la Morale* for October, 1939. But what will perhaps add interest to this appraisal by the countrymen of his adoption is that modern English and American philosophers also show the great impact of this genius. One can only briefly refer to men like Samuel Alexander in England and Professor Sellars in this country, who in their doctrine of emergent evolutionism have given us an Anglo-Saxon reinterpretation of creative evolution. One might also refer to Professor Montague's estimate of the significance especially of Bergson's doctrine of duration in calling it "the most challenging and instructive of modern visions." Or one might turn to Whitehead who in his metaphysical masterpiece, as important as it is difficult to understand, *Process and Reality*, freely acknowledges his great indebtedness to Bergson. Associating him with William James and John Dewey, he writes, "One of my preoccupations has been to rescue their type of thought from the charge of anti-intellectualism, which rightly or wrongly has been associated with it."

It may, therefore, in final conclusion, fairly be said that Bergson's thought in all its richness has contributed much to the philosophic thinking in all civilized countries and has imparted to it some of the nobility inherent in the man. Only one endowed with the gift of prophecy could forecast how great a place will be reserved for him in the history of philosophy, but one can only hope that his influence will never be lost.

## A Little Flower of New England

ARTHUR FREDERICK MABON

**I**N HIS notable book, *The Flowering of New England*, Van Wyck Brooks has given a scholarly and brilliant presentation of the conditions and influences which produced the literary efflorescence of New England in the nineteenth century. It may be suggested that in New England there has been much other flowering: the flowering of educational institutions, the flowering of industrial plants (not very attractive to the eye, but very important to its people), the flowering of political ideals and leadership, and the flowering of an unsurpassed playland with its mountains and lakes and beaches. One particular flower of New England I especially like to look at and linger over. It is without pretension, but it cannot be hidden. Its roots reach down deep into its earliest settlements; its growth has been as widespread as its borders. It smiles serenely on many a sunlit hilltop. It dots its river valleys. It is sequestered behind its rock-bound and sand-swept coast line. It is the central attraction of the countryside where fields are cultivated and harvests gathered. This little flower is the New England village.

Glance at a road map of the entire region. Black out its heavily indented cities and towns. Let your eye run over the names of places in dim type. These are its villages. Count them if you can. Name them one by one. You will be surprised at what that old New England stock did in seeking out and establishing its centers of communal life. As to where this stock came from, the village names in many instances would give a clue. With clearness they do disclose the country of its origin—Durham, Colchester, Peterborough, Petersham, Oxford, Essex, Norfolk, Litchfield, Chelsea, York, Hampton and all the rest. Such names are a transcription from the map of the British Isles.

Not only have names been brought across the water. The very character of these communities has had a foreign origin. In his *Sticks and Stones*, Lewis Mumford has pointed out that "for a hundred years after its settlement there lived and flourished in America a type of community which was rapidly disappearing from the old world. There the common lands

were being confiscated by the aristocracy, while in New England the common lands were being re-established with the founding of new settlements." In "The Deserted Village," Oliver Goldsmith poured out a lamentation over what was passing under his own eye in a somewhat later period. How he loved his

"Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,  
Where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain,  
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,  
And parting summer's lingering bloom delayed;  
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
Seats of my youth where every sport could please;  
How often have I loitered o'er thy *green*,  
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!"

But further on, he was constrained to write in a different mood:

"Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,  
Thy sports are fled and all thy charms withdrawn;  
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,  
And desolation saddens all thy green."

In his dedication of this poem to Sir Joshua Reynolds, Goldsmith made note of the idea that there would be those to aver that "the depopulation it deplores is nowhere to be seen," but he insisted that in his excursions he had found the very conditions he had described. And to him these were signs of national decay. The simplicities of life were disappearing. The increase of luxury was plainly evident, and it was foreboding. This judgment he voiced in the familiar lines:

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay:  
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;  
A breath can make them, as a breath hath made;  
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
When once destroyed can never be supplied."

About this peril of luxury there could hardly be two opinions. But what about this "bold peasantry, their country's pride"? How did they get that way? In our English language there are words which have undergone curious changes in connotation. Among these are the words "pagan" and "villain." Originally a pagan was just a countryman: a villain was a serf. Today, speaking broadly, a pagan is a worldling and a villain, a scoundrel. By what twisting of circumstance and of thinking did this come about? In

his valuable study of words, Trench has told us that the Christian Church fixed itself first in the seats and centers of intelligence, the towns and cities of the Roman Empire, and in them the first triumphs were won; while long after superstition and idolatry lingered in the obscure hamlets of the country. So the pagan of that period was the uninstructed and the unenlightened one. And as for the villain, who originally was but a rustic, a peasant, a villager, he has become, in common speech, the rascal. In his case it might generously be suggested that under the conditions in which he doubtless often lived and toiled, the provocations to look after himself in his own way were not slight. But in a truer sense, the obscure rustic has become "the bold peasantry, their country's pride." The modern pagan would hardly be one to regard himself as "uninstructed and unenlightened." He certainly does not belong to the obscure hamlets. He is decidedly urban. So it is the urban who has become the pagan; and as for the real villain, he is now the city gangster, the metropolitan racketeer.

This digression should not lead to the conclusion that all villagers are saints, although some of the earliest settlers of New England appear to have adopted that idea. In the annals of one community, it was recorded that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof: voted, the earth belongs to the saints; voted, we are the saints." I have passed through that village many times, and it is among the sweetest and loveliest of the plain, but I can hardly believe that its inhabitants would vote as did their pious forefathers. For one thing, it has a police department; and what village does not boast of a police department? It may be, as we are sometimes assured, that most of the deviltry in them comes from outsiders. Saints and sinners make up the record of this beautiful but wayward world, and for the most part the early settlers knew this well enough. They made provision to deal with local disorders, and ordinarily they considered the best way to do this was "to nip them in the bud." The particular buds were the bad boys, and the nipping could be for offenses which, if recognized today, would put many of our highly esteemed citizens under official condemnation. Playing on the Sabbath was a flagrant misdemeanor (to use a mild term), and was sternly interdicted. The names of such transgressors were taken, and the culprits suitably dealt with. But it is worth noting that the officers laying hands on these transgressors received pay for their *work* on the Sabbath day. To put the procedure in its original form: "It was voted and agreed

that William Morris shall look after the boys on the Sabbath Day, to keep them from playing, and for encouragement the town to allow him 10 shillings: further, he is to give an account of the names of the young men who are disorderly."

But other buds appeared—buds not to be nipped, but to be fostered; buds which came to beautiful bloom in that and in succeeding generations. Spiritual faith and devotion were there deeply rooted and cultivated. The meetinghouse determined the character and limits of the community. Around it the community crystallized in a definite pattern, tight and homogeneous. It was faith which founded these communities and added strength to them. With this in mind, it is not difficult to understand the trend of such communal life—mutual co-operation among its members, free discussion in the government of its affairs, the subordination to the public good by free men of their own free will, and always the recognition of the kindly providence of God.

In his observations and reflections upon American institutions, De Tocqueville at a later period paid high tribute to this form of life in New England. "Its existence," he wrote, "is a happy one. Their government is suited to their tastes and settled by themselves. The native of New England is attached to his township because it is independent and free; its welfare is the aim of his ambition and his future exertions. . . . He practices the art of self-government within the sphere of his reach, and he collects clear and practical notions of the nature of his duties and the extent of his rights." These observations are pertinent in our day, when the theories and practices of government are undergoing revolution throughout the world and even within our own country. Should they succeed, would they elicit such words as appear in the above quotation—"happy," "independent and free," "affection," "self-government," "duties and rights"?

Since the first settlers divided the land and established the principles which were to govern them in their life together, many generations have come and gone. And with the changes of the years, much in the customs, the manners and institutions, familiar to those of an earlier period, no longer prevail. Even such an institution as the village blacksmith, once the indispensable man in the community, has almost disappeared. And to discover an old-fashioned general country store would be a reward worth going far afield to find. The chain store has invaded the village, but it lacks so

much—that rare combination of odors, for example, which for generations has been silently emitted from cracker barrels, butter firkins, leather and rubber and dry goods, socks and shirts, pickle jars, salt pork, tobacco dust, sanded floors and all the rest that comprised that original department store. It would be difficult to imagine any tradition surrounding a modern chain store. For one thing, it has to go straight. If P. T. Barnum could be relied on, that was not the case with the general store of his day. His father built one for him, to offset his aversion to manual labor. But the son, although recognizing there was much to do, leads one to ask whether too much might not have been done there, for he said of himself: "I drove some smart bargains with women who brought butter and eggs to be exchanged for dry goods. . . . People were often astonished at the character and the color of the bargains when they got home." Such methods of business are foreign to the chain store, though not necessarily because of any excessive virtue.

The old stock is disappearing. The registry of the village school would disclose an ancestry which has been rooted anywhere but in England. Old burying grounds in the back country, with tombstones weather-beaten and covered with lichen, bear silent witness of what must have been an extensive population in areas now almost abandoned. But the march of time, despite all that it has swept out of its path and all that it has introduced in its advance, has still spared much that has long been characteristic of the New England village. It is a hardy plant and one cultivated generation after generation by loving and tender hands. It is doubtful if there are any communities in the land which command more personal affection.

Like villages everywhere, the New England village is small. When it ceased to be small, it sprawled out into a populous and colorless mill town or into one more big commercial city. This has happened in many instances. It has been swallowed up, and thus has disappeared. A village disappears not only by being depopulated, but by becoming overpopulated. It seems safe to say that more villages have disappeared by overpopulation than by depopulation. A fact especially to be noted is that at the beginning the village was not only small but was purposely kept small. It restricted its area, and the number and character of its inhabitants. As these communities increased in size, they threw out new communities. Land was abundant, and there was no excuse for people treading on one another. This idea of restrict-

ing rather than of extending community growth may not seem to make sense to many in our time, but much may be said for it. The small community has its vices, and they are petty and mean. It also has its virtues, and they are basic and enduring. William James might well have had in mind the small New England village when he wrote his diatribe against "bigness in all its forms," and his glorification of what he called "the invisible, molecular moral forces that work from individuals, stealing in through the crannies of the world like so many soft rootlets, or like the capillary oozing of water rending the hardest monuments of man's pride." "The bigger the unit you deal with," he continued to assert, "the hollower, the more brutal, the more mendacious is the life displayed." Such a sweeping utterance invites reflection and discussion. But the more one thinks of it, the more disturbing is its measure of truth. At any rate, in any consideration of the real moral forces of the world, there could hardly be a question about the importance of the individual. And the village does recognize the individual, whoever he may be. In such communities, people come to know one another and learn to respect one another for their own worth, irrespective of occupation or position. No doubt there are social cleavages, but they are never so rigid as not to yield in daily personal contacts and in those general functions to which everybody turns out, such as country fairs, moving pictures, church suppers and the town meetings for the settlement of the town's affairs. The only way to know people is to meet people. And to this end the village post office, the village street and the village market afford the most informal and natural introduction. It is through these contacts and acquaintances that one comes to understand the basis of true democracy, which is, the worth of the individual. Bobbie Burns expressed it all in a single immortal line:

"A man's a man, for a' that."

It is this recognition which is encouraged and strengthened in small communities rather than in congested centers of population, where men talk about "the masses" (hideous word); or in industrial areas, where they talk about so many "hands"; or in large assemblies, where "numbers" count most. It is probable that the early New Englander was not thinking much or even at all about these distinctions when he felt his community was getting too big and shooed off the newcomers, telling them to go and start something of their own; but it was an idea with valuable social implications.

The infusion of what has been called a foreign element in the New England village deserves more than a passing reference. If wisely met, it need not awaken undue fears. The village may become, as we have reason to believe it has become in many instances, the finest school for the Americanizing of newly naturalized citizens. There they come in touch at first-hand with something solidly American, breathe its atmosphere, unconsciously absorb its traditions and learn not only its language but its laws and ways of life. If it does not always turn out this way, it may be that the native Yankee has closed in too much upon himself, unwilling to share his heritage with those whom he regards as of lesser breeds.

In dwelling upon the smallness of the village, it should be said that there is nothing distinctive about the New England village in this respect except the fact that it was originally kept small, and in many cases with purpose. Perhaps we may come back some day to these settlers' sense of values. Still, there are features of these communities which are very definitely distinctive. They are so distinctive that when you see them you know you are in New England, and not in some other part of the country; just as, in motoring through the villages of French Canada, you know you are in Quebec and not in Ontario. You know these New England villages by the broad avenue with widespreading trees, sometimes with double rows, which welcomes you. Then, back from the avenue are the dwelling houses—plain, painted white, with green shutters; if very old, unpainted and weather-beaten: then the meetinghouse, usually on the "green," itself surrounded with noble elms; close by the town hall and the school and the library, in many cases a memorial, the gift of some family, lovers of the community.

Such is its form; but behind all forms are the forces which have created and which maintain them. It is the plant which produces the bloom. It is not only the seed, but the soil and the sun which have entered into the flower. What I am trying to say is this: such communities as we are thinking of have much behind and within and above them. They have years behind them, generations of families, old traditions, firmly-rooted customs, a spiritual background of faith and courage. Such influences are transforming and enduring. At the outset a plan was there, but it did not then appear what it would become after the long years: a center of quiet, dignified, enchanting loveliness. To quote again the author of *Sticks and Stones*, "Would it be an exaggeration to say that there has never been a more complete and intelligent

partnership between the earth and man than existed for a little while in the old New England village. . . . Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, it was a garden city in every sense that we now apply to that term, and happily its garden and harmonious framework have frequently lingered on."

But more than its gardens and its harmonious framework have lingered on. The very atmosphere of the years continues to envelop and permeate it. Its novelty is not in its newness. It is in its oldness. If time has written some wrinkles on its brow, it has also invested it with a preciousness similar to that which we associate with a priceless heirloom or a painting of one of the old masters. It evokes not only admiration, but veneration. Its dignity, its placidity, its simplicity have not come from without but from within itself. And yet it is not unconcerned about what is going on in the world without, or indifferent to the claims upon it. It has ever heard the Macedonian call of country and of every quarter of the globe. It has sent forth its sons and daughters in all directions to become leaders of thought, masters in industry, heralds of the gospel, ministers of healing. Out from them have come many to be the nation's statesmen, jurists, journalists, preachers, scientists, educators and poets. Not alone in its broad, shaded, green and colonial dwellings has the New England village come to flower, but even more effectively in the lives of those who, nurtured in its homes, in its schools and in its churches, have contributed to the well-being and beauty of human life in our own land and in all lands. A single contemporaneous illustration of this: A few months ago there appeared in the daily press the obituary of Dr. Mary M. Patrick. She was an outstanding educator, who went to Turkey in 1871 to teach in a missionary school in Erzurum. For over fifty years she remained in the vicinity of the Golden Horn. A new school for girls was established in Istanbul, became a Woman's College, and Miss Patrick was its first president. Education in those days was a hazardous undertaking in that part of the world. Spies of the Sultan would knock at the door of a citizen and say: "Your daughter is attending the school of the infidel; take her out." But within five years, this same Sultan granted the school a Turkish charter. The influence of this woman spread throughout Turkey and into Bulgaria and Greece. One of her pupils, a leader for greater freedom for Turkish women, was condemned to death. She fled to Anatolia. When Kemal banished the last of the Caliphs, he named this condemned leader for greater

freedom for Turkish women the head of the college in Istanbul. Where did this American educator, who exerted such an extended and profound influence in that quarter of the globe, come from? The obituary said that she was born in Canterbury (not Canterbury, England), Canterbury, New Hampshire. With the aid of a magnifying glass, I was able to discover its location on the map. It is a small village on the Merrimac River. A Woman's College and a race of free Turkish women would appear to be a glorious bloom for Canterbury on the Merrimac.

Somewhere there is a passage of Gilbert Murray which reads as follows: "The secret of a happy and successful life lies in the finding of some end to work for, which is at least relatively permanent and unaffected by the brevity and transiency of our physical powers. To have lived so that something we have loved and served may live after us; that great ideal act of sacrifice, which makes the soldier the great hero of imaginative literature, can be realized also in the service of civilization wherever that service is faithful to the end." In no small measure, and beyond all proportion to its size and importance, has the New England village made contribution to such service. And such service by its representatives is no small attraction of these communities. They have become shrines to which pilgrims turn their steps. Even some motor cars slow down speed within their borders, not alone because of the reduced speed limit required, but because of a recollection that in this village or another some national figure first saw the light—a Daniel Webster, a Henry Ward Beecher, a Harriet Beecher Stowe, an Emily Dickinson, a John Brown, an Ethan Allen, a Nathan Hale, a Horace Bushnell, and how many more of like distinction! Again may it be said that what constitutes a community is not its dwellings alone, but they who dwell within them. And if among these dwellers some rare spirit has taken form and come to flower, the whole community, with pardonable pride, claims distinction for itself. Such communities are scattered widely over the land. New England has no exclusive right to greatness in this respect. Every community rejoices, and has a right to rejoice, when this and that man born in her has, in some conspicuous degree, helped the world to become a better world for all. But the New England village may be said to have had this advantage over most other sections of the country, it got off to an earlier start in developing its communal life and training its offspring. To be sure, its offspring came to brightest flower only after having been transplanted to

other soil and under a different sky. But no transplanting avails for larger and richer growth if there be not virtue in the stock itself. When transplanting does not take place, there is always danger of the stock's thinning out and going to seed. This frequently happens in village life. The infusion of new elements may correct this tendency. When it succeeds, its perennial vigor asserts itself in renewed sturdiness and beauty. The village is an organism, and needs constantly to be reborn.

As to the future of these lovely centers, whose paean I have been trying to chant, what is to be said? It is much easier to dilate over the past than to figure out what is going to happen in the years to come. He would be a bold person who would dare to predict anything in times such as these. When the very life of free peoples in large areas of the world is being heartlessly strangled, a return of the Dark Ages might appear to be the only prospect confronting the civilization which we have known. But dismissing such a dire outlook, we may not rightly dismiss the fact that the conditions which gave rise and made possible the type of community life of which we have been thinking have greatly changed, and will probably be marked by still greater changes. What is going to keep these communities going? Already they are becoming more and more industrialized. We know also that they are being sought out and occupied as summer homes. No one would view lightly such uses. The villager must have employment, and a small industry or two often helps to fill that bill. And those for whom life begins anew at sixty-five or seventy, may count themselves fortunate in such surroundings. But the perpetuation of a village as a vital element in national life demands more than a chance for some people to can tomatoes or mix face creams; to provide a habitat for the retired, to show off seventeenth and eighteenth-century colonial dwellings and furnishings, or to enjoy a pleasant week end with house parties. It is the spirit of a village which is above all to be conserved and strengthened, the spirit of friendliness, of mutual co-operation, of honorable dealings, of cultural refinements, of free discussion, of neighborly relations and of religious obligations and devotion. Without this spirit, the New England village is but a cluster of cottages or more pretentious dwellings, delighting the eye perhaps, but quite devoid of soul. If the nation is to continue to grow in wisdom and character, it is to its village life that it must continue to turn, as in the past it has turned with confidence. And this applies to village life everywhere throughout the land.

In a recent British publication, Sir W. Beach Thomas has contributed a chapter on "The Rebirth of the English Village," written, of course, before the present war. In it he says: "This England was founded on the village community, and in spite of changes which have caused some wholly to disappear, and have robbed almost every village in certain districts of a large percentage of its inhabitants, the village still keeps its ancient place. It remains a society—the only society where the classes and professions coalesce into a natural and friendly relationship, where kindness is not regarded as either patronage or charity in the vulgar sense of that term, nor service as humiliation, where wealth recognizes its privileges and obligations; where religion is central and centralizing." Nevertheless, he was obliged to add that "the decay of the village is obvious, and the causes are not obscure. The land has died. But in spite of all, we must keep our villages and revivify them if we are to keep our spiritual as well as our economic solidarity. It must be understood that the problem is not one of preservation. We do not wish to preserve the village as we would preserve an old building. It must fit itself to the rhythm of accelerating progress. . . . Even at its worst, the village with its natural humanity and its neighborliness and sense of individuality can give our civilization something which the town cannot give. It is essential to the complement of national life."

Much that was thus written of the English village and its rebirth may be applied to the New England village. To its birth we trace the beginnings of the nation's free institutions. To its life we owe the cultivation of those qualities of mind and heart and will which have contributed widely and intensively to the development of the American character. Its perpetuation, with the perpetuation of all village life within our bounds, is essential to the preservation and further progress of the whole nation.

## Form Criticism as an Experiment

ISMAR J. PERITZ

FORM CRITICISM or *Formgeschichte* (form-history), as the Germans call it, is a new and recent attempt to account for the origin and character of the Gospels. As long as the Gospels were read as independent units designed for their respective communities they created no "problem." Each Gospel was taken at its face value and no questions were raised. But when they were placed side by side in an authoritative collection or Canon (circa 200 A. D.), thoughtful readers noticed variations and skeptics took pains to call believers' attention to them, much to their embarrassment. For instance, it was asked, why should the evangelists report the written superscription on the Cross in so varying a manner?

Matthew: THIS IS JESUS, KING OF THE JEWS

Mark: KING OF THE JEWS

Luke: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS

John: JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS

Or why, again, should so varyingly be transmitted the words of Jesus at the institution of the Lord's Supper?

Matthew: TAKE EAT, THIS IS MY BODY

Mark: TAKE YE, THIS IS MY BODY

Luke: THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU. THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

Matthew: DRINK YE ALL OF IT: FOR THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE COVENANT, WHICH IS POURED OUT FOR MANY

Mark: THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE COVENANT, WHICH IS POURED OUT FOR MANY

Luke: THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT IN MY BLOOD, EVEN THAT WHICH IS POURED OUT FOR YOU

Or again, why should Mark have no Lord's Prayer at all; and Matthew have it: OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN; and Luke, FATHER, with other differences?

At first little attention was given to these differences; but those who saw them persisted and would not be satisfied with easy-going slurring over. Then attempts were made to harmonize the variations by tampering with the

manuscript text. Thus Luke's shorter **FATHER** in the Lord's Prayer was harmonized with the fuller form in Matthew, accounting for the fact that in the manuscripts on which the Authorized Version is based both have "Our Father which art in heaven." But the Revised Version, which is based on earlier and more correct manuscript originals, restores the earlier form and says in the margin: "Many ancient authorities read *Our Father who art in heaven*. (See Matt. 6. 9.)" There are many such attempts at assimilation of varying forms in the interest of conformity. But a more thorough-going attempt at harmonizing was the combination of the Four Gospels into one consecutive whole, called **Harmony of the Gospels**. One of the most notable early attempts of this kind was Tatian's *Diatessaron* (circa 200), conveying the idea of a safe way "Through the Four Gospels." This "Harmony" proved popular, and for centuries displaced the canonical Gospels in private and public Scripture lessons. The reason for this is easy to see. Harmonies lend themselves to smoothing out discrepancies. For instance, if there are varying accounts of the calling of the disciples, the naming of Peter, the cleansing of the Temple, et cetera, the "harmony" can be arranged so as to have two of each, occurring at different times in the ministry of Jesus, and thus do away with discrepancy in the accounts; or in varying wording (as above) insert only one.

But this "harmonizing" did not satisfy the thoughtful: it did not solve the problem. It was asked, Why did God give us four Gospels that differ? In due time a revolt against the method of harmonizing made itself felt. Oversimplification may do as much harm as criticism; and those who decry undertaking critical problems as a danger to faith take not into consideration that there may be danger also in steadyng the Ark.

Thus arose the modern critical inquiry into the relation of the first three Gospels to each other (Synoptic Problem) and their relation to the Fourth Gospel. How can it be accounted for that the first three Gospels are so strikingly alike in general content, order of events, and phraseology and at the same time so strikingly different in the same three directions? How also can be accounted for certain omissions and additions? The inquiry began in earnest only about a century ago, simultaneously with the modern interest in the historical life of Jesus, starting with Strauss' *Leben Jesu* and Lachmann's hypothesis that Mark underlies Matthew and Luke, both appearing in 1835. The former was the first to attempt to treat the life of Jesus as a

biography in the light of his human environment and was thus the founder of that spreading interest in the "Life of Christ" study. But out of the social interest in the life of Jesus came the modern critical study of the Gospels as sources for the construction of such a life.

Before substantial agreement on the origin and nature of these sources was reached in the Two-Source Theory, now generally accepted by critics, various other attempts were made. Among these was the Oral Hypothesis. This is of special interest because it has now been revived by Form Criticism. This hypothesis assumed an oral gospel tradition, which by repetition had become fixed or stereotyped, and preceded the written tradition. It failed, however, to meet the requirements and was given up, but not without leaving behind the contribution, now revived, that the oral gospel tradition preceded the written. Another earlier attempt was the Borrowing Hypothesis. It assumed that one of the written Gospels was the earliest and that the others borrowed from it, and either shortened or lengthened it. Thus it was held by some that Mark was a shortened form of Matthew. Nine possibilities of such relationship exist and each had its proponent. The hypothesis left as its contribution that Mark was the first written Gospel and that Matthew and Luke and even John are indebted to him.

Thereupon followed the Two-Source Theory which still, with modifications, holds sway, even with Form Critics. It assumes that two sources are the basis of the first three Gospels. One of these sources is the Gospel of Mark, substantially in its present form. It is characterized by being mainly *memorabilia* or accounts of deeds and events; and that its origin is reminiscences of the Apostle Peter transmitted by Mark. The second source is *logia* or sayings of Jesus, with more or less historical or biographical elements. This source lies back of Matthew and Luke in what they have of teaching matter not found in Mark. This source is commonly designated by the letter *Q*, explained by some as standing for the German word *Quelle* or source, and by others as being the next letter in the alphabet following *P* for Peter or the Petrine source in Mark.

It will prove useful to attempt a tentative picture by which to envisage the stages in the formation of our Gospels according to the two-source theory to better see by contrast the claims of Form Criticism.

The first stage was the life and teachings of Jesus in history. This is fundamental and impossible to overstate, and all the more so in view of the

neglect at this point by Form Criticism. It is the Jesus of history that is the only efficient genesis of the gospel tradition. If it had not been for His potent personality there would have been no gospel tradition. No explanation of the written Gospels is worthy of notice that minimizes the living and historic reality of the personality of Jesus. Form Criticism at this point is but one step removed from the myth theory. For whereas the myth theory resolved Jesus into an astral deity without historic existence, Form Criticism makes Him the product of the early Church. Against both errors we posit as the first stage in the gospel tradition the historic Jesus.

The second stage was the oral tradition. It consisted of what Jesus had done and said as told by word of mouth by His disciples. This was done most probably in the Aramaic, the common dialect of Palestine in the time of Jesus, and possibly also partially in Greek which was current in those parts. To what extent this was *preaching* on which so much emphasis is placed by some of the Form Critics, like Dibelius, would depend upon circumstances. It was not preaching in the ordinary sense when the disciples talked among themselves. This type of oral transmission of the gospel record also has its "Sitz im Leben" or occasion in life. It must have preceded the more formal use of the oral tradition.

The third stage was the written sources of the gospel tradition. This was done in Aramaic and parts possibly also in Greek. It is not impossible that the beginning was made while Jesus was still alive, as Torrey holds. The illiteracy and lack of literary and historical interest of the disciple circle, which Form Critics stress so extravagantly, are exaggerations and woefully needed *ex hypothesi*. Writing was common within the disciple circle, and incidental references to writing are frequent in the Gospels, as may be verified by the use of a concordance. The Oxyrhynchus papyri of the *Logia Jesu*, although they belong to the second century, indicate that sayings of Jesus were early written down. It becomes thus probable that the Aramaic sources, the earlier form of Mark and Q or P and Q, belong to this stage.

The fourth stage is that of the translation of the two Aramaic sources into Greek. Of such translation we have the testimony of Papias (130 A. D.). There is no reason for skepticism concerning the value of this testimony which calls Mark the interpreter of Peter and speaks of the translation of Matthew's *Logia* from the Aramaic or Hebrew.

The fifth stage was the formation of our Gospels in their present form.

To this period probably belong the attempts, mentioned by Luke in the preface to his Gospel, of drawing up narratives concerning the activity of Jesus on the testimony of eyewitnesses. Mark's Gospel was the product of this period and it consisted of editing it in the Greek form which it now substantially has. In the case of the Gospel of Matthew it consisted in the combination of Peter's account as furnished by Mark's and Matthew's sayings, edited with a characteristic outline and additions which mark it so distinctively the Jewish-Christian Gospel, with its emphasis upon the fulfillment of prophecy. In the case of Luke it consisted also in the combination of P and Q, but the latter differently grouped and formed, and with notable additions drawn from other sources, both memorabilia and logia, all edited with Luke's characteristic historical design to furnish in his Gospel and Acts a Gentile-Christian account of the origin and progress of the gospel to Rome. In case of the Fourth Gospel the editorial work was more thoroughgoing and independent. His use of the traditional material was more selective and deviating; and it is characterized by an interpretation of both the deeds and teachings of Jesus which is unique and has given his account the name of the "Spiritual Gospel."

In view of this complicated literary history of the Gospels, it has been recognized that the evangelists do not give us photographs of the person of Jesus but impressionists' portraits, or at best photographs highly retouched. Critics who hold the two-source theory do not claim strict objectivity in the portrayal of Jesus. Strictly objective history, if such a thing is at all possible, is the product of the modern scientific age. It did not exist in the age of Jesus. It is readily admitted, therefore, that the gospel records were influenced by the "Sitz im Leben" or occasion in life in the early Church. But whether this is true to the extent that Form Criticism claims is quite another matter. At any rate, it requires a thorough examination to which it is now necessary to turn.

It is at the point where the two-source theory leaves off that the Form Criticism experiment begins. It has set for itself the task to explore the origin and nature of the two sources P and Q. Discarding the testimony of Papias and Luke that these sources are based on the reports of eyewitnesses and contain biographical and historical data, Form Critics substitute for it alleged internal evidence to the effect that these sources contain no historical

or biographical data for the construction of a life of Jesus. This experiment is just twenty years old. It began in 1919 with the publication<sup>1</sup> of a work on the Framework of the History of Jesus, in which the author pointed out that the Gospel of Mark is not really a consecutive history of the movements of Jesus as to time and place, but consists of a large number of single stories which are on the whole arranged on the basis of subject matter which is not always clear because it is interwoven with the different religious, apologetic, and missionary interests of the early Church. In Mark's connecting introductions to the pericopes there are still the remains of an itinerary discernible, but it has been lost beyond recovery because the early Church apparently had no interest in it. On the whole the stories about Jesus are on the same plane; and only here and there is it possible to detect its original place. Thus there exists no life of Jesus in the sense of a developed biography, no chronological scheme of the history of Jesus, but only single stories and pericopes which are placed in a framework and include even Mark's characteristic "straightway." The author of this scholarly treatise should not be classed with the Form Critics: he prepared the way for them, but his conclusions were not adverse to the historical value of the material, but only affected the chronological order. He may be drawn upon again and again for the defense of the conservative attitude toward the gospel records.

The main proponents and defenders of the method of Form Criticism in Germany are M. Dibelius, R. Bultmann, M. Albertz, G. Bertram; in England, Lightfoot; in the United States, F. C. Grant, R. W. Riddle. The method has two aspects, a literary and an historical. The literary relates to the FORM which the parts of the gospel tradition assumed. It has led to the coinage of a terminology which is imposing. It consists of *paradigm* (Dibelius) or *apothegm* (Bultmann), short stories with a saying at the center; *novelle* (Dibelius), legends; *paranese* (Dibelius), sayings of Jesus (Bultmann); *controversy* (Albertz). It is the discovery of these "forms" and their particular labeling that has given the name "Form" Criticism to this experiment. An immense amount of time and energy has been expended in tracing the literary forms of the gospel tradition to their supposed origin within the history of literature. It appears, with all due respect to learning for learning's sake, much ado about nothing. Such forms are common to all

<sup>1</sup> K. L. Schmidt, *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu*, Berlin, 1919.

peoples of all ages and languages; and they are found in abundance in the Old Testament. Comparisons with Hellenistic or Rabbinic usage yield not genetic but simply analogical relations. These forms have their origin in life, but it is the life of humanity as expressed in folklore. They have no direct bearing upon the historical character of the gospel tradition. There is no reason why they might not have been used by Jesus Himself who had all the wealth of His Hebrew literature to draw from. We are therefore willing to let Form Criticism have all the glory that comes from this new (?) discovery.

The matter is entirely different, however, when we approach the second or historical aspect of the new method. For this touches the historical origin of Christianity, the historical life of Jesus. Next to form, Form Criticism places its emphasis upon the principle that we must apply the criterion of the "Sitz im Leben" or occasion in life in dealing with the gospel tradition. This means that we must not take the gospel record as reflecting the situation, time, and thought of the period of Jesus' earthly life, but as reflecting the experience of the early Church or during the second or third generation after Jesus' death. In other words, the Gospels throw light upon the time in which they were composed or written and not upon the time of which they tell.<sup>2</sup> They give us a picture of what Jesus was believed to be during the later part of the first century and not what He was in His lifetime. The Gospels are the product of the early Church, and the contents originated, according to Dibelius, in the preaching of the early Church; according to Bultmann, in its catechetic instruction; according to Albertz, in its controversies; and according to Bertram, in its worship. It is only in one thing they all agree, namely, that the earliest disciples of Jesus were too ignorant in literary method or too indifferent to biography or history to make an effort to perpetuate the memory of their Master.

Dibelius has recently furnished us with a publication that embodies the result of the research of Form Criticism as affecting what is left of the contents of the Gospels when the task is done. It is eloquent with negation. Under the title "The Message of Jesus Christ"<sup>3</sup> which is the translation of his *Botschaft von Jesus Christus*, the author has collected what he regards as the earliest material of the gospel tradition. It consists of 27 Old Stories;

<sup>2</sup>This critical principle is well known in Old Testament criticism as *Tendenz*; but there it could be controlled by double or triple accounts belonging to different times. No such data exist in the Gospels.

<sup>3</sup>Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939.

21 Parables; 15 Sayings; 12 Great Miracle Tales; and 12 Legends. Not one of these is in its original form but even they, though they are the oldest and most original, were produced by the preaching of the early Church. On the basis of a computation of the number of words in the "Message" and the four Gospels it is found that Dibelius' "Message" contains about fifteen per cent of the content of the Gospels; eighty-five per cent has gone with the wind of Form Criticism. It must be evident that what is left of the Gospels is very much reduced, impoverished, and unsubstantial, resembling more a ghost than a reality. It is no wonder, then, that when Dean Inge became acquainted with an English version<sup>4</sup> of this new experiment, he wrote: "Professor Lightfoot, in his scholarly volume, has expounded clearly and reverently the present tendency of German thought on the Four Gospels. The book will give a shock to many; but it is far better that we should know the conclusions to which continental scholars are being driven." But fortunately, knowing the conclusions is one thing and accepting them quite another. The Form Criticism experiment has not gained much of a following. It is confined to a small group who stand high on account of their scholarship, but have been characterized by competent opinion<sup>5</sup> as being too easily attracted by the "novel" in New Testament criticism. The tendency to be found abreast of and "alert" in the use of new conclusions is dangerous to the balance of critical judgment needed not too readily to fall in for them. The protest against Form Criticism's extreme conclusions is steadily on the rise. Two recent books by authors who occupy the highest rank in Biblical scholarship, Professors James Moffatt and William F. Albright, have come out decidedly against its method and conclusions. Speaking of what he calls "the left wing of Form Criticism," Moffatt says: "The inquirer is informed that there was next to nothing memorable in the Galilean's career; His immediate adherents played no great rôle in the growth of a religion with which neither He nor they had any personal connection. Four-fifths of the contents of the Gospels are imaginative embodiments of the later community's creed; any memories of what Jesus did or said are based on vague traditions which, as a rule, neither require nor suggest the evidence of eye-witnesses."<sup>6</sup> Albright says: "The method employed by form critics is essentially an application of the 'logico-meaningful' principle of Sorokin, which

<sup>4</sup> R. H. Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation in the Gospels*.

<sup>5</sup> J. MacKinnon, *The Historic Jesus*, 1931, pp. xiiff.

<sup>6</sup> James Moffatt, *Jesus Christ the Same*, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1940, p. 24.

is only a prolix statement of the familiar adage, 'The proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof.' In practice it becomes a complex case of the logical fallacy known as *argumentum in circulo*, except where it can be controlled by entirely independent outside facts. In New Testament studies such outside facts are seldom available."<sup>7</sup>

Form Criticism thus brings us face to face with the obligation either to acquiesce in its faulty method and conclusions or to combat them. What is involved, however, is not the alternative between an uncritical attitude and criticism, but between criticism and hypercriticism. A critical view of the Gospels does not claim strict objectivity. It is hard to tell sometimes where poetry ends and history begins. It is highly probable that there is no underlying strictly chronological or topographical scheme; and that they are not biography in "our sense." But this is far from admitting that we have no reliable testimony from eyewitnesses; that the Church from its Christ of faith created the Jesus of history, instead of from the Jesus of history its Christ of faith. The great fault of Form Criticism is its imaginative subjectivity in evaluating tradition. The same fault vitiated the results of Old Testament criticism in its attitude toward Moses as the founder of the Hebrew nation and religion. The mistake is being corrected under the influence of Alt, Gressmann, Barton, Meek, and Albright. Form critics need to learn a lesson from experience and history; not to repeat the mistake of hypercriticism on the founder of Christianity. Court justice has a principle that might well be emulated in judging tradition: the accused is innocent until proven guilty and gets the benefit of the doubt.

To illustrate the arbitrary rejection of material we may instance the account of the healing of Peter's wife's mother. It is a simple story as Mark gives it and no secondary motive is discernible. Jesus grasps the woman by the hand and pulls her up; and when she is on her feet the fever has left her and she serves Him. In the parallel accounts the cure becomes increasingly more miraculous; but in Mark it is a plain case of suggestive psychology. The question is, why should the story be in and why should form critics like Dibelius and Lightfoot leave it out? Its inclusion cannot be accounted for on the ground that it originated in the need of preaching salvation (Dibelius); nor that it was needed for catechetical instruction (Bultmann); nor

<sup>7</sup> W. F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*. Johns Hopkins Press, 1940, p. 293.

that it illustrated controversy (that is, theological controversy) (Albertz); nor that it aided in worship (Bertram). The simple ground for the inclusion of such a mother-in-law story is its reality. Schmidt includes it with the comment that it fits exactly chronologically and topographically within the context: "We are taken from the synagogue directly to a person well-known to the disciple circle, Peter's mother-in-law. Remarkable is the enumeration of the four brothers, of whom only two function, while the other two had been mentioned before as members of the family. The indications are that we have here a story that goes back to an account of Peter in Aramaic."<sup>8</sup> But this biographical character of the story is inconvenient to the hypothesis that the gospel records contain no such matter, and it is therefore left out. The denial of biography in the gospel record of which this is but one of many illustrations becomes thus almost amusing. To declare, as Form Critics do, that the early disciples of Jesus expected the end of the age and had no interest in history, may be true of a small group; but it was not true of all. If it were true of all, we should have no gospel records whatever; and Luke's "many" who had attempted gospel accounts could not have existed. To say, as Dibelius does, that the disciples were "fishermen, tax-gatherers, perhaps also farm-laborers, unfamiliar with the literary practices of the world," sounds strange from such a source; for Paul was a tentmaker; and the Jews of the first century insisted, as is well known, that every boy learn a trade.<sup>9</sup>

Further, Form Criticism as represented by Dibelius and Bultmann holds a view of the historical mission and character of Jesus that influences and vitiates its conclusions relating to the gospel records. It is the view that Jesus was a scribe and rabbi like Hillel, and a good Pharisee, and not decidedly a prophet.

Bultmann stresses his idea that Jesus was a rabbi. Because He was called "Rabbi" he regards Him as having belonged to the professional class known as scribes, trained and having passed His examination as such; He was called Herr Doctor, and practiced the profession until John the Baptist converted Him to become a prophet with an apocalyptic message. But the prophet's mission was only temporary; and He resumed His calling of a Rabbi. "He acted," says Bultmann, "as a teacher in the synagogues; sur-

<sup>8</sup> Schmidt, *Ibid.*, p. 55f.

<sup>9</sup> For a full treatment of this phase, see, E. F. Scott, *The Validity of the Gospel Record*.

rounded Himself with disciples; disputed over matters of law with disciples, opponents and inquirers who came to Him as a great rabbi. He disputes in the same forms as the Jewish rabbis, uses the same argument, the same manner of speech; and like them coins sayings and parables. Jesus shows close relationship with the rabbis in the contents of His teachings.<sup>110</sup> But this is erroneous because it gives details that are relatively insignificant and belong to prophet and scribe alike, while failing to recognize the vital elements wherein they differ. Both in the contents and method Jesus was the prophet and not a scribe. The scribes taught in schools (*beth hammidrash*) and charged admission fees. This is illustrated by the famous story of Hillel snowed under on the roof of the school because he had not earned the coin necessary for admission to his lesson. Jesus, on the contrary, taught in the open and anywhere He could find an audience; and He taught women as well, and above all the common crowd—the *am-haarez*—which was not done by the rabbis but was common among the prophets. Jesus had the reputation of “having never learned,” that is, of not being trained in the rabbinic schools; and “he spake with authority” (that is, “appeal”) “and not as the scribes,” who based their decisions on precedent. Dibelius also offers alleged analogies to Jesus’ teachings from rabbinic literature of stories and anecdotes, saying: “Similarly in a few Paradigms, questions of Halahkic or an Hagadic kind are put to Jesus: fasting, rubbing ears of corn, but especially the tribute money and the Sadducean question are passages most strongly reminiscent of the corresponding rabbinic stories.”<sup>111</sup>

These comparisons, although very common now, are highly precarious. Quite aside from the consideration of their relative age, one cannot understand how anyone who has a firsthand thoroughgoing knowledge of the Gospels on the one hand and the early Midrashim and the Mishnah on the other, can justify seeing in them analogies. They move in different spheres and atmospheres; and this may be illustrated in the comparison of Jesus and Hillel.

The origin of speaking of Hillel as the teacher of Jesus and consequently putting them on a par, so frequently done now, is not as well known as it ought to be. It grew out of Reformed Judaism which placed Jesus on a higher level: formerly He was regarded as dangerous in leading Jews away from the Law; but now He was considered worthy to be regarded as a

<sup>110</sup> Bultmann, *Jesus*, 1929, pp. 55ff.

<sup>111</sup> *From Tradition to Gospel*, pp. 133ff.

disciple of Hillel, the great rabbi. It was Abraham Geiger, one of the founders of modern Judaism, who in 1864 said: "Jesus was a Pharisee, who followed in the steps of Hillel. He never uttered an original thought."<sup>12</sup> This was anticipated by a year or two by Renan: "He mostly followed Hillel in His teaching. Hillel had fifty years before uttered aphorisms which bore great similarity to His own. In consequence of his patience under poverty, the meekness of his character, his opposition to the priests and hypocrites, Hillel was, properly speaking, the real teacher of Jesus, if the name teacher may be mentioned at all where the subject is one of such sublime originality."<sup>13</sup>

This highly imaginative picture of Jesus has since become the stock in trade of the modern Jewish view of Jesus represented by Montefiore, Abrahams, Klausner, and in current Jewish literature and pulpit. From the Jewish point of view it is a praiseworthy concession, a growing recognition and appreciation of Jesus, paving the way for a better understanding. But as a Christian view it is incongruous and unfounded, although it is quite true that there were good and noble and spiritual Pharisees in the time of Christ. Jesus might have had Hillel as a teacher, but the facts point the other way. Consequently, it was natural that this Jewish view of Jesus should be questioned and controverted. This was done, as soon as the new view appeared, by the great Franz Delitzsch of the University of Leipzig. He had a first-hand knowledge of the rabbinic material; and he drew a striking contrast between Jesus and Hillel, showing that they belonged to different spheres and that there was no relation between them.<sup>14</sup> While the argument on some phases is now antiquated, on the respective teachings it is still valid. In justice to both it must be emphasized that Jesus was the prophet and Hillel the scribe. Hillel drew up "the seven rules of Hillel" which laid the foundations of rabbinic exegesis which brought the isolation of the Jews and drove them into ghettos. Jesus and Hillel are the antipodes of social and religious democracy. One built a fence around the ceremonial law, the other pulled it down. One gave ninety and nine per cent of his attention to such trivialities as whether it is permitted to eat an egg laid on the Sabbath, while scarcely one per cent comprises what is recorded of him in the Mishnah that is of

<sup>12</sup> *Judentum und seine Geschichte.* 2 Aufl., Breslau, 1865.

<sup>13</sup> *The Life of Jesus.* English translation, New York, 1866.

<sup>14</sup> *Jesus und Hillel.* 3rd ed. Leipzig, 1879. An English translation by P. C. Croll in *Elzevir Classics*, New York, 1884.

ethical and spiritual nature; while Jesus, on the other hand, repudiated legalism and gave all His attention to ethical and spiritual matters.

The view that Jesus was a Pharisee and scribe has shown itself in Form Criticism in the excision of anti-Law teachings of Jesus. While Dibelius retains some of the anti-Pharisaic teachings of Jesus, Riddle<sup>15</sup> excises them in toto, saying: "There is no possible place in the experience of Jesus for the conflicts with the Pharisees to have occurred as they are described. . . ." They are the inventions of the Church. Even a Klausner repeatedly declares that you cannot account for the antinomism of Paul without presupposing Jesus as his forerunner; but Form Criticism thus removes from the gospel records elements that give the reason for the steadily progressive opposition and final rejection of Jesus, leading to His worldwide mission of spiritual religion. Hillel remained in his narrow circle the peace-loving rabbi; and his fame of "reformer" was confined to the "prosbul," relating to real estate; but he was never accused of "turning the world upside down," nor did his followers ever sing:

How sweet the name of Hillel sounds  
In a believer's ear!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear.

The failure to recognize in Jesus the prophet is responsible for Form Criticism's going in the wrong direction for analogies to the literary forms of the gospel records. Every literary corner has been ransacked to find analogies: Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, the *Achikar Legend*, the *Faust Book*, anecdotes from Frederick the Great, Sadhu Sundar Singh, et cetera;<sup>16</sup> but the prophetic material in the Old Testament with its fullest references to Elijah and the prophets has been strangely overlooked. The career of John the Baptist and that of Jesus Himself represent a revival of prophetism with its old type of social and religious passion although in new political environment. As Guignebert points out,<sup>17</sup> it is quite possible that the disappearance of prophetic activity has been exaggerated, and that although the strength decayed the tendency persisted. The traditional antagonism between prophet and priest, as illustrated by Amos and Amaziah, "Noadiah and the rest of the prophets" and Nehemiah, reappeared between Jesus and the scribes and

<sup>15</sup> *Jesus and the Pharisees*, p. 177.

<sup>16</sup> E. Fascher, *Die formgeschichtliche Methode*. 1924, pp. 228ff.

<sup>17</sup> *The Jewish World in the Time of Jesus*, 1939, pp. 62ff.

Pharisees. With the revival of prophetism would naturally come the revival of prophetic literary activity. For analogies of the gospel records it is strictly logical to turn to the stories of Elijah and to the "writing" prophets. The Hebrews had a genius for biography and history, extending to near the Christian era, as illustrated by the stories in the books of Maccabees. We can only surmise in what manner the records of the prophets took their first written form, but we know it was done. They closely resemble the Gospels in their general literary makeup and contents; but they are considered usable data for the construction of history. If there were space for it, one might be tempted to draw a parallel between the biography and history of Jeremiah and that of Jesus: the figurative form of the call, the so-called Temple discourse, the aroused antagonism, persecution and death, and so on. What the Hebrews could do then they still could do in the time of Jesus; and when the gospel records receive fair and unbiased appreciation, they prove that such was the case.

An outstanding fault with Form Criticism is that its critical method is subjective, arbitrary, and inconsistent, leading to the elimination of material that is needed for a consistent picture of the Jesus of history. To illustrate, I select one phase of the trial of Jesus. It belongs to the Passion Narrative which Form Critics regard in its Markan form as the earliest written and most authentic part of the gospel records. For lack of space I reduce my limits still further, namely, to the night session of the Sanhedrin, Mark 14. 53-65. The whole section, except the opening sentence: "And they led Jesus to the palace of the high priest," Dibelius omits as unhistorical. This night session of the Sanhedrin has been recently subjected to a critical analysis, resulting in a considerable amount of literature. It began with the French jurist Juster<sup>18</sup> who denied that the Jews had at the time of Pilate the right of execution of criminals guilty of blasphemy. Professor Hans Lietzmann adopted the view;<sup>19</sup> and argued that the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin, with the death penalty for blasphemy, was unhistorical. Dibelius follows him;<sup>20</sup> and so does Lightfoot,<sup>21</sup> who makes the admission that he "constantly followed Professor Lietzmann closely." Rejecting the night session as unhistorical, Professor Lightfoot disposes of it, in characteristic Form Criticism

<sup>18</sup> *Le Juifs dans l'empire romain.* 1-2, Paris, 1914.

<sup>19</sup> *Der Prozess Jesu.* Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaft. Berlin, 1931, pp. 313-322.

<sup>20</sup> *Neutestamentliche Zeitschrift,* 1931.

<sup>21</sup> *History and Interpretation in the Gospels,* pp. 126ff.

fashion, as a later invention, grown out of "the developing convictions of the Church and the treatment it had received from the Jews by the time at which this story may have taken shape. . . ." Lietzmann<sup>22</sup> had discarded the night session because there was "no reliable source for it." Lightfoot<sup>23</sup> does not consider this "an insuperable difficulty;" but objects to it on account of "the unlikelihood of a night session at all." But what is to Lietzmann the real insuperable difficulty in the night session is its content, namely, the testimony of Jesus which he could not have given, according to Lietzmann, "I will destroy this Temple, made with hands, and in three days will build another, made without hands," because it is inconsistent with his recent cleansing of the Temple; and Lightfoot agrees with him. But there is no inconsistency. The Temple was sacred while it stood, irrespective of what might ultimately become of it. Both critics regard Stephen as the originator of the saying. "The saying," says Lietzmann, "contrasts the risen Jesus as master of the new life with the powerless Mosaic law, as John 2. 19-22, correctly interprets it: it breathes the spirit of the converted Hellenists of the type of Stephen who, according to Acts 6. 14, 'questions in such a sense the significance of the temple cult.'" The saying was thus "transferred to Jesus who thus becomes the prototype of Stephen." Dibelius, on the contrary, says: "Such a saying must have circulated in the tradition. . . . For this vouches the martyr story of Stephen and certainly the Gospel of John." With whom, then, the priority of the saying lies, is a subjective judgment in Form Criticism.

But the matter lies deeper. Of the four accusations brought forth at the trial of Jesus, this saying concerning the Temple is the most significant and historical, although somewhat veiled, affecting the real ground of his rejection and death. It stamps him as the prophet, the exponent of spiritual over against formal religion. It reminds us of a similar saying with similar consequences. It was Jeremiah who had said in his famous Temple discourse (7. 14): "Therefore will I do unto the house which is called by my name . . . as I did to Shiloh," for which he was tried and condemned to death for blasphemy. It accounts more reasonably than any other for Jesus' death penalty for blasphemy; and meets exactly the requirement. Further, it accounts for the opposition of the Pharisees, which is now made light of; the death of Stephen; the early antagonism of Paul; for his conversion, when the

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 315.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

fiery Pharisee is converted to the Prophet of Nazareth; for his accompanying call to his mission to the Gentiles; for his persistent anti-Law attitude carried through his letters to the Galatians and Romans; and for his own persecution and death. It was Paul who first saw clearly the implications of the mission of Jesus regarding the universality of religion involving the abolition of the ceremonial law. As a genuine Pharisee he fought it with all his might, and kicked against the prick, that Jesus might be right; but the Galilean conquered. But our contention is that Jesus gave His life to break down the middle wall of partition. When thus probed, the excision of the night session is due to the uncritical view of Form Criticism<sup>24</sup> that Jesus was a Pharisee and scribe and not a prophet.

Space is lacking for an account of a new type of gospel criticism that has made considerable progress in Germany, although it has not been heard of in this country. It is based on E. Siever's "Tone Analysis," according to which every person normally has a rhythm in speaking as individualistic as his finger prints or face. Those who have trained themselves in detecting it can distinguish the "voices" in a document. In the pursuit of these investigations, the critics go back to the original Aramaic, and make use of the achievements in Aramaic lore of Torrey, Burney, Dalman, Littmann and others. The subtlety of the data involved is a handicap; and it is not likely to become popular as Form Criticism. Associated with the tone analysis is the psychological approach in exegesis. A notable contribution to this new type of criticism and exegesis is a commentary on Mark.<sup>25</sup> It is in striking contrast with Form Criticism, critical but not hypercritical; positive rather than negative; conserving every item of historical and biographical data. It deserves a more sympathetic and favorable hearing.

Form Criticism, on the other hand, although it has thrown some fresh light on the literary forms of the gospel tradition and emphasized the influence of the early Church in shaping and modifying the gospel material, has failed in its main experiment to account for the Gospels as the product of later generations of Christians.

<sup>24</sup> For a reversal of Juster's view, see U. Holzmeister, *Zur Frage der Blutsgerichtsbarkeit des Synedriums*, *Biblia*, Vol. 19. 1938, pp. 34-59.

<sup>25</sup> *Das Evangelion nach Markos*. Psychologisch dargestellt von Fery Freiherr von Edelsheim mit einem Anhang: Schallanalytische Auswertung des Marcus-Evangelium von Prof. Dr. E. Sievers. Leipzig, 1931.

# The Tragic Sense of Life

BERNARD EUGENE MELAND

"In the deepest heart of all of us there is a corner in which the ultimate mystery of things works sadly."—WILLIAM JAMES.

MAN'S destiny, either as a single life history, or as a racial experience, rising out of the clash and interplay of personal and national events, with their ecstasy and pathos, ever appears to the thoughtful mind as a source of insoluble problems. Now and then a glimmer of insight unexpectedly illuminates the path ahead; and for a moment it seems that the truth for which life is lived is suddenly made clear. But we rarely hold these vistas for long; and the confusion that closes in upon our luminous moments leaves us only wistful where once we felt confident and expectant.

## I

The very common experiences of life are touched with a tragic sentiment. Fortunately this sentiment is not constantly in focus, else living would be a painful experience; but its mood wells up and floods in upon us periodically, dissolving the buoyant will to live and turning the praise of life temporarily into a sobering lament. The incidents that bring it to notice are numerous and varied: disappointment in plans, frustrated hopes, failure in some effort of importance, unexpected illness compelling changes in one's routine, the realization that time is passing and that all one had hoped might have been, obviously will not come to pass—these and many similar experiences distill this sentiment of sadness. There is something in the contrast between the outreach and the actualization of every life that creates a tragic sentiment. Fortunately for most of us, as Gamaliel Bradford has observed, *life is the continual triumph of hope over experience*. Yet we never quite escape the haunting truth of experiences which hover over and impale our hopes.

This tragic sentiment eludes the experience of life lived in the foregrounds. It comes to notice occasionally as a fleeting touch of melancholy

following close upon some incident, a word, or perchance a melody that catches the ear. It is perceptible in ceremonials commemorating achievement over a span of years, in family reunions, or chance reminiscences that catch up the flood of events in a single kaleidoscopic vision of the years, as in Noel Coward's *Cavalcade*. The element here, if it can be made sufficiently articulate to be perceived, is the corporate wistfulness of men and women, hopefully participating in the flood of affairs, rising above disappointment to encounter the next more effectively, only to feel again the pangs of inadequacy, frustration, sometimes irreparable loss. Yet hope persists. Were it not for this unremitting confidence of the human spirit in vital people this continuous taste of defeat would hang as a pall upon the common life; but with new capacity to hope beyond experience, defeat comes to mean simply the end of one effort and the beginning of another. This fact has impressed itself upon me many times as I have pondered the experience of two people whose lives I know well. They are of the genus whom Carl Sandburg describes as having "storms in their blood, seeking peace." All their days they have striven for a margin of material resources with which to find a degree of release from anxiety and the pinch of poverty. Yet physical want has never been their most conscious concern. Within their meager worldly estate they have sought to inherit the world's most precious goods; not directly, but through their children. Like many foreign-born parents, they had hoped to realize through the children what they, themselves, only faintly apprehended in their wistful moments: the culture of the competent mind and of the aristocratic spirit. Yet dreams have not been kind to them, and their hopes have been only meagerly realized. Tragic turns more devastating than death or bankruptcy came into their path. Only the mirrored pain of an inward aching in eyes now grown languid with longing remains to recall those shattered dreams. Despite this deep draught from the cup of failure, they have lived on expectantly—not with the zest that once marked their efforts, but with sufficient heartiness of spirit to make their company genial and reassuring. These two lives are not singular in their experiences. What I see in their conquered defeat, thousands, who are thoughtful, will sense in other lives. It is the expression of a universal phenomenon in the midst of life—the triumph of hope over experience.

## II

The tragic sentiment that hovers over experience is doubtless rooted in a deeper mood of despair which affects us continually, yet which fades from consciousness for the very reason that it is too baffling to be confronted. Our subconscious skill in creating a defense against that which imperils certitude makes this possible. That deeper despair issues from the realization that the years we had counted on for accomplishing our plans are passing; that life is approaching its end; that its coming is inevitable, bringing with it culmination in its most final sense. There have been those who, upon sensing the immediacy of this event, have confronted it so realistically as to be delivered utterly from its disquietude. "All these two years," wrote Katherine Mansfield in her *Journal*, "I have been obsessed by the fear of death. This grew and grew gigantic, and this it was that made me cling so, I think. Ten days ago it went, I care no more. It leaves me perfectly cold. Life either stays or goes."

Bowing in this final manner before the inevitable is our surest way of relaxing the inner tension that intensifies our fears. There is no escaping the devastating effect which death has upon our dreams and desires. Especially is this true when it descends as a bolt from the blue, demolishing by accident or sudden intrusion the rising city of our hopes and cherished affections. A husband in his early thirties, suddenly left emptied by the grim reaper, or a young wife shorn of support and affection just as she ventures upon motherhood, cannot take this matter with the philosopher's calm. Even when the adventure of the years has been carried to maturity, to see the one who has been so much a part of your venture, *go down into dust*, however gently, is to know irreparable loss. With our meager knowledge of this mystery we can do little more than acknowledge the crushing effect it has upon us when it casts its shadow, and, with such fortitude as we are capable of, recover the perspective that again gives pattern to life.

Yet, if we knew more about the meaning of death in its relation to life and were better adjusted to the total experience that involves both life and death, the dimension we call death would seem less of an evil. There doubtless are aspects of this problem which the human mind, at this stage of its growth, cannot clearly apprehend. All the world religions have turned to this open window. And where the heart is not too troubled by the

perplexities that the mind perceives, this quiet trust may sublimate the most ruthless ravishes of the phantom death.

Certain men of the modern temper have turned this matter into reverse and have said, if life has no end, then it has no clear measure of value. Its very limits and sure termination give to it an intensity that enhances the total passage of the years.<sup>1</sup>

There are those who find it enough to know that the good they achieve will endure through the influences that persist in people and institutions that survive them.<sup>2</sup>

Yet neither of these alleviate the sense of frustration and loss that descends when individuals, precious to our every moment, vanish from our sight. We require a more healing view of the matter. I find such a view of it in a beautifully written essay by one who has known this "barbed sting."<sup>3</sup>

"If we are wise enough to know it," she writes, "we may stand before the death of our beloved as we stand before a great work of art. Death like art eternalizes its object. Death crystallizes a relationship, if we allow it to, fixes it as if in marble, rescues the beloved from the depredations of time, forever preserved, untouched by change. This view of death comes not at once. It is a discipline. . . . The wise man accepts bereavement very quietly, marks it not with solemn black, does not brood over it or cling to it or live in it. He makes friends with it, rather; he goes along with it, and it with him. He does not stand before a work of art; he lives it. For him his beloved is untouched by change. Time, which is certainly intensity, blesses it. Happy pictures, happy recollections of the past, hold out their hands to him, come trooping back. To accept and then to keep the pace; to remember by forgetting. There is a balm here, companionship as vivid as the communion of saints."

I doubt that anyone who has not known the stunning and crushing defeat of death can grasp this valiant reprisal of life. Possessed with those we cherish, the sense of possible loss hovers over us as an aching void. We will not be reconciled. Only the necessity to adjust to the finality of loss can compel us to attain this mood.

Death as our own destiny may seem to present quite another aspect of the problem. It means being wrenched from one's family association. It means being cut off from one's work and the absorbing interests of one's career. It means being severed from friends and from the various causes and movements that have lured one. It means also being taken out of the fascinating stream of existence and thrust into utter mystery. Yet the reso-

<sup>1</sup> Corliss Lamont, *The Illusion of Immortality*.

<sup>2</sup> Jane Addams, *The Excellent Becomes the Permanent*.

<sup>3</sup> "Is Death Frustration?", Cornelius Geer LeBoutillier, *Anglican Theological Review*.

lution is again in attaining a religious adjustment to change. Where there are transitions this change is less disturbing. But in contemplating it, imagination always presents death as cruelly sudden. This psychological fact suggests that the fear of death is more the fear of its sudden inrush upon us. Were life and death considered as inseparable rhythms, like morning and evening, night and the dawn, summer and fall, winter and spring, we should be more adjusted to it as an event. We do not regard it as an event. It is the disruption of events. But the universe does not give us this vision of it. It is our rebel imagination that deceives us and hides the reality from us. Then, as if to torment us, it thrusts the phantom death before us—*suddenly*, and in grotesque form. Night and dawn, winter and summer, life and death! These are the rhythms we live by and live with. Existence is bipolar: we are born and we die. We should never contemplate life apart from death; nor death apart from life; for they are two sides of the rugged hills of existence. There could be no hills without these two sides.

### III

Death as the normal culmination of life is one thing; death as a violent assault of the evil upon that which is good is quite another matter. There is a haunting sense of bitterness that comes over one, for example, contemplating moments of high tragedy in history in which good men have gone down in death before the onslaught of greedy and ambitious men, or of a bigoted mass-morality. One feels this upon recalling the scene in the *Phaedo*, depicting the noble Socrates meeting death:

"Presently the servant of the Eleven came and stood before him and said, 'I know that I shall not find you unreasonable like other men, Socrates. I have found you all along the noblest and gentlest and best man that has come here; and now I am sure that you will not be angry with me, but with those whom you know are to blame. And so farewell, and try to bear what must be as lightly as you can; you know why I have come. . . .'"

"Socrates looked up at him and replied, 'Farewell; I will do as you say. Come Crito, let us obey him; let the poison be brought if it is ready. . . .'"

"Then Crito made a sign to his slave who was standing by; and the slave went out, and after some delay returned with the man who was to give the poison, carrying it prepared in a cup. When Socrates saw him, he asked, 'You understand these things, my good sir, what have I to do?'

"You have only to drink this," he replied, "and to walk about until your legs feel heavy, and then lie down; and it will act of itself." With that he handed the cup to Socrates. . . . "I suppose that I may, and must, pray to the gods that my journey hence may be prosperous: that is my prayer, be it so." With these words he put the cup to his lips and drank the poison quite calmly and cheerfully.

"Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend, a man, I think, who was the wisest and justest, and the best man I have ever known."<sup>4</sup>

The same grim chill descends when one reads these lines so familiar to many:

"Then the soldiers of the Governor took Jesus with them into the castle and gathered about him all the battalion. They stripped him and put on him a crimson cloak, twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head, put a reed into his right hand, and, going down on their knees before him, made sport of him, shouting, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spit on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After they had finished making sport of him, they took off from him the crimson cloak and put his own clothes on him, and led him away to crucifixion. . . . On coming to a place called Golgotha, they gave him wine mixed with gall to drink. He tasted it and would not drink it. Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' When they had crucified him, they divided his clothes by casting lot."<sup>5</sup>

The two elements in these scenes that confound our emotions are the goodness and the wantonness displayed. But the element that tears at our depths is the futile and flagrant sacrificing of noble and good men to satisfy the wanton desires of ignorant and ambitious contemporaries. In the midst of such hopeless folly, wronged goodness becomes high tragedy.

In scenes such as these, we have the problem of good and evil graphically put and intensified. It is a problem that runs through all of life. Every generation has known it. Every culture and individual life have encountered it. For it is the disrupting of that which is precious by that which is less worthy—even vulgar and profane. Philosophies of life have sought to resolve this problem; but seldom have they found an answer that transmuted the pain and bitterness which the tragic vision imposed. In Christian philosophies the tragedy of the Cross has been variously rationalized—sometimes soberly expounded, other times cheaply accepted as an

<sup>4</sup> *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, translated by F. J. Church. London: 1920, pp. 209-213.

<sup>5</sup> From *The Good News Told by Matthew*, in *The Riverside New Testament*, translated by William G. Ballantine, pp. 53-54.

easy way out for man himself, and with a lightness as if it were what one might expect since God is so fond of man.

The Cross and the cup of hemlock are sobering realities if men will penetrate their meaning. They are not mere artifices to make men's route simple. They are tragic utterances acknowledging with lament, on the one hand, the fact of evil in our midst, and, on the other, the fact of "costingness" in the growth of good. The soundest resolutions of the problem, therefore, have been those which have accepted the full weight of the tragedy, seeking rather to understand the fact that it presented and to find the course that might cope with its implications, rather than to dissolve or sublimate the tragedy in an easy-going metaphysical explanation. Evil demanding tragic overcoming, as in Royce's thought and Hocking's, deeper community in suffering, transmuting the experience of evil into blessedness, are both worthy efforts to deal with the problem, so long as the concern to grasp the spiritual balm does not insulate one from empirical demands to rout the evil. Whitehead has moved a step beyond both Royce and Hocking in suggesting that evil opens up a new realm of possibility. This is possible because, in Whitehead's philosophy, every existent thing carries in itself possibilities beyond itself through creative relationship with the reality of God.

"The depths of His existence lie beyond the vulgarities of praise or of power. He gives to suffering its swift insight into values which can issue from it. He is the ideal companion who transmutes what has been lost into a living fact within its own nature. He is the mirror which discloses to every creature its own greatness. The kingdom of heaven is not the isolation of good from evil. It is the overcoming of evil by good. This transmutation of evil into good enters into the actual world by reason of the inclusion of the nature of God, which includes the ideal vision of each actual evil so met with a novel consequent as to issue in the restoration of goodness. God has in His nature the knowledge of evil, of pain, and of degradation, but it is there as overcome with what is good. Every fact is what it is, a fact of pleasure, of joy, of pain, or suffering. In its union with God that fact is not a total loss, but on its finer side is an element to be woven immortally into the rhythm of mortal things. Its very evil becomes a steppingstone in the all-embracing ideals of God."<sup>6</sup>

Evil, when it is a fact, is not to be shunned or evaded, but made to yield the blessed good that impinges because of the new orientation which it demands. This creative transmutation of the event of evil into possibilities

<sup>6</sup> *Religion in the Making*, pp. 154-55.

that are good is not a simple reading of evil as good, nor a quick change of focus to blur the vision presenting evil. When it is interpreted to mean either of these, it becomes another theoretical distortion of truth. Whitehead's view gives a dynamic revaluation of events of evil, because existence viewed as process, carries possibilities of recovery and change which existence, viewed apart from creative change, cannot presume. This view suggests that there are two ways of viewing evil: as spectator and as participant in the events involving great evil. The spectator brings to his envisagement of events a certain amount of bias or conviction as to what ought, or ought not, to be. In this perspective, the facts as they are appearing and occurring may be completely overlooked. The participant bears a more vital relation to these operative facts and therefore cannot escape them so completely. Being smack up against these facts, his judgment becomes one of selection and adjustment rather than of mere appraisal. And he becomes more concerned with a technique for coping effectively with these facts and forces than with evaluations of them. Such a one takes as his starting point, not the thesis that *evil ought not to be*; but with the realization that *evil is a fact*; that evil is in the world because the world is in process of becoming. No event of value comes into existence without struggle and cost in some form. And no event of value, by the very fact that it is existential, escapes the hazards and perils of being in existence with events of disvalue or less value. The growing frontiers of existence are shockingly uneven. Every generation presents a ragged edge of varying views and sentiments, insights, desires, and prejudices. A Socrates must pursue life and its values alongside of citizens who are dominated by a mass-morality. The saint and the creative workman must fulfill the longings of their genius in a world populated, in part, and at times controlled by, men who are drunk with the lust for power. These extremes and contradictions within the social stream of every period and generation make the operations of evil inevitable, so long as there is value in existential form. This is not to condone evil, nor to become resigned to its devastations; it is to confront its inevitability with a realism that impels commitment to the good. For only by turning to the good and promoting its increase can the force of this inevitable fact of evil be diminished or frustrated.

The Cross, like the cup of hemlock, is a challenge as well as a symbol of deep devotion to the good. The challenge comes from the element of

wanton folly which makes them inevitable. This is the social value of the Cross and the cup of poison. They sharpen our indignation toward that which needs to be routed: bigotry, intolerance, ignorance, organized oppression, indifference to suffering—and impel us to join cause with the good. Somewhere between the stoic acceptance of evil as a persistent phase of existence, and the restless discontent with this fact, lies the religious way of dealing with this problem. It involves the ardent effort to discover the degree to which wantonness can be diminished, and the good safeguarded and increased.

#### IV

The will to do battle with evil involved in the growth of the good should not, however, turn us into enemies of the good as well, or into obstacles, resisting the growth of good. Evil is not always a resistant to the growing good; it is often an accompaniment of the process of creative change. Every era of radical change, as well as periods of transition, present a confused picture of good and evil. Judgment one way or the other depends on how one views the order of existence undergoing change and the possible future outcomes. Our tendency, because life is so dear to us and because the creative works of our hands seem so precious, is to center our thoughts and devotion upon what has come into being. We become static-minded in our estimate of values. Part of the transformation of life that brings us to the religious perspective in its high sense is passing from this devotion to things that *are* to a devotion to the greater good that *might yet be*. It is not living simply for the future. It is not living for any temporal value. It is, rather, living in such a way that the whole sweep of possible value, carrying the meaning of God, becomes the focal, motivating vision of our devotion. One who grasps this truth penetrates the religious meaning of all high tragedy, where perfected value of being has gone down in dissolution before the onslaught of advancing forces, potent with new possibilities of growth. It is the most disturbing and defeating fact we can know, so long as the vision is focused upon refined existential being as supreme value. The break-up of every civilization has renewed this defeating experience. Fundamental changes in every organism, susceptible to growth, manifest it.

“All things must change, the vision pass,  
The shadow lengthen on the grass,  
The ship go down behind the sun,

The passion of the heart be done.  
The flower droops; we cannot stay  
The lovely miracle of May.

"But in the time of change, a rare  
Illumination fills the air.  
There is a shift, a holy pause  
Between what is and what once was.  
The senses quicken with delight;  
The scene grows pure upon the sight.  
Our fixity is lost; the eyes  
Look out with passionless surprise,  
And in that instant we may see  
The shape of an eternity."<sup>7</sup>

This is the perspective that focuses the creative possibilities of value, relating good and evil. The transitionally transforming incidents, ruthless, and in comparison, vastly less worthy than the beauty they destroy, measured by standards of existential value, make for the increase of value and meaning. Evil is in this transition, but the transition itself is not the evil. Yet the transition that makes possible the growth of good cannot occur without this accompanying evil. This is no easy truth. It is, in fact, one of life's ugliest to contemplate. In irreverent minds it becomes the justification for the blackest of evils bearing the pretense of noble ends. Yet, when we take this as our excuse to suppress its truth, or to ignore it as fact, we join cause with those who arrest the growth of good. We become traditionalists in the deadliest sense. We betray the heritage of organic being which we bear. We become idolaters and turn from the one true God whose existence is in the growth of good. Every citizen of the community does this when he becomes "sot" in his ways. Every man of business does this when he thwarts the development of the enterprise for lack of vision. Every educator and administrator does this when, having become one of the "grand old men," he resists the new growth that breaks in upon the institutions in growing years. It is so, too, when cultures are in transition. They who hold to existential being, as very God, betray the one true God in their midst. They obstruct the growth that must carry the life of earth into its new day. Their motives are often high—as high as their insight permits. More often they are timid men, rather than willful idolaters. They cherish the

<sup>7</sup> Theodore Roethke, "In the Time of Change," *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1937.

values that are known and are reluctant to reach out toward the yet-unrealized good, because their faith is meager.

There is a way of seeing the course of events that opens beyond present catastrophes into the vaster operation of the world's process. In this very turn of the tide, when "a power goes out of us," something of the meaning and worth of life appears with strange poignancy. What we lose through the crumbling of our own personal dreams, we may recover through a deeper understanding of the tragic course of events that has created our havoc. For such understanding of the life process not only contributes to a capacity to encounter dissolution, even world dissolution, without yielding utterly to the devastating sense of defeat; it transforms our whole attitude toward what is happening so that we participate expectantly in the larger drama of world change. We achieve what the artist calls *psychic distance* with regard to the events of the times. And in that detachment and distance we are able to distinguish between developments that we deplore because they threaten our own personal safety and developments which clearly carry the seeds of evil. We are delivered from an excessive self-preservation complex that leads one to pronounce all change as evil, and are given a perspective that enables us to sense evidence of a creative working.

There is religious recovery in this kind of understanding. It not only delivers us from the pain of personal fears; it opens to us the real significance of a world in travail, and enables us to accept pain and to endure sacrifice with proper courage. To understand this time of change is also to achieve a balanced view of impending consequences. Even though the present be a time of destruction when old structures are being cast down, one who has this faith will be sensible of a creativity that works in the present to rear the fulfillments of tomorrow. In the face of violence and chaos, he will look for "budding growth which secretly springs in the strewn debris." He will know that through all the shift of circumstance and decay of time, some flowers of breath-taking beauty will grow. So in the midst of apparent dissolution, when worlds are crumbling and death seems near, he will remain expectant before this drama of change, even as he fights desperately to salvage his assured heritage.

# Rebuilding a Truth-Centered Civilization

HAROLD PAUL SLOAN

**N**O PROOF is necessary to support the statement that the Protestant Church in America does not command the recognition formerly accorded to it. To the question, "Why is this?" the answer is instant: *Protestantism, with its tremendous emphasis upon Truth, and its commanding appeal to man's reasoning mind, requires a certain understanding of, and attitude toward, Truth, in the point of view of the age; and it inevitably declines when this attitude is wanting. Any impoverishment of Truth, no matter what the cause, must necessarily result in a declining Protestantism.*

The actual world situation, however, is more serious than might at first seem indicated by the mere circumstance that the Protestant Church has a reduced influence. The fact of the matter is, it is not only a Christian communion which has been affected disadvantageously by the contemporary attitude; it is civilization itself. Our free modern world, as we knew it from the sixteenth and through the nineteenth centuries, had a high confidence in the universe and therefore, a wide interest in discovering its inner mystery. Men were sure that Truth was good; and so they gave themselves to its exploration. This viewpoint produced the increase of free institutions, the increase of science, and the multiplication of inventions.

More recently, however, a new attitude has arisen, due to the dominance of a speculative naturalism in scientific circles. This viewpoint has robbed men of any sense of goodness in the universe. As a consequence, it has emptied all meaning out of Truth, and all dignity out of life. This new attitude has reduced Truth to meaningless knowledge, and life to the futility of sensation and fate. Bertrand Russell's "unyielding despair" is its inevitable conclusion. Krutch is necessarily right, there is no longer room for man in such a naturalistic universe. And this oppressive outlook, which has been so common, especially in educated circles, has unfounded at once the rational appeal of the Protestant Church, and the noble structure of our modern civilization.

## JESUS, THE SPRING OF MODERN VALUES

Few may have realized it, but that contribution to history, because of which Jesus does evidently divide it, has been precisely His gift to men of confidence in the universe. Manifestly the channel of His creative influence cannot be narrowed to His teachings alone. His impact upon our point of view involves everything He was and did, quite as much as it does what He said. It involves His life, His teachings, His death, His resurrection, and His bequest of the Spirit of Truth. It is this whole which has helped us to believe the universe good, and so to be interested in the mystery of Truth locked up within it. Here, unquestionably, is the chief factor in explaining the sudden rise of science and of free institutions from the sixteenth century forward; and more recently the rise of multiplied modern inventions.

The Roman Church made the Truth of Jesus an accepted world philosophy. The Protestant Church made the Truth of Jesus the actual viewpoint of average men and women. This Truth thus became the central concern of a civilization; and this circumstance produced a new world.

Truth, then, as Jesus grasped it, and as He released it into history was evidently much more than a mere knowledge of sense experiences. Jesus' Truth involved not only sense perceptions, but also intuitive insights which the mind itself contributed. As Jesus experienced it, Truth was a sure conviction of infinite meaning for personality in the creative purposings of His Father; and this immense awareness included the following direct contributions of the mind itself:

The insight of *self*, with the dim awareness of *other* standing over against it;

The insight of orderly relationships—cause and effect, et cetera, reason;

The insight of duty;

The insight of beauty;

The dim but unescapable insight of surrounding infinities, and of one's proper relations to them.

Within this frame of majestic insights and recognitions the physical senses contribute certain concrete perceptions which make them explicit; and they give them also an objective reference. So the insight of *self*

and *other*, plus *beauty*, plus concrete sense experiences make possible art, and self-expression, and love.

So, again, the insight of *self* and *other*, plus *duty*, plus concrete sense experiences make possible justice, righteousness, government.

So, once more, the insight of *self* and *other*, plus the *infinities*, plus concrete sense experiences make possible aspirations, religion, and the conviction of Eternal Life.

Actually this analysis is too sharp, for each of these experiences involves man's total consciousness. Thus, love involves duty and the infinities, and not merely beauty; and righteousness involves beauty and the infinities as well as duty. Reason, too, and religion, both involve the whole sweep of values disclosed in man's inner awareness.

And now the fallacy of contemporary scientific naturalism becomes plain. Naturalism does violence to man's inner consciousness, distinguishing between equally authoritative viewpoints of the mind. It accepts the witness of some; and arbitrarily sets aside the witness of others, either repudiating them, or explaining them away. The result of course, has been that impoverishment of man's outlook, and that meaninglessness of life, which Krutch and Russell, among others, have found most distressing.

The contrast between the creativity of Jesus' outlook, and the blight of this contemporary naturalism, is too vivid to be missed even by the most superficial of thinkers. The former produced an increasingly noble civilization; whereas the latter, in spite of its proud utopianism, has not been able to produce anything but a resurgence of tyranny and brutality. Some may, indeed, deny this, but their denial will be in vain; for it is precisely where we have most turned away from the largeness of Jesus' Truth that we modern men find ourselves most embittered and hopeless.

In spite of the pride of our intellectualism, I am impressed that our mistake evidences an amazing superficiality which has corrupted our thinking. Jesus would have been quite incapable of our irrationality. His viewpoint, of course, saw all intuitive insights as equally authoritative—duty and the infinities equally with beauty and reason. And of necessity He was right. The mind is a unit, and responsible truth must be a coherent whole. Each insight, and each revealing experience is just one standpoint from which inclusive Truth can be approached.

And so when, widely, men did attain to this total viewpoint of Jesus,

necessarily they came to have confidence in the goodness of the universe; and, consequently also, to experience a consuming desire to know its mystery. The result was science. Similarly, when men did attain to Jesus' total viewpoint, they discovered immediately an inclusive reverence for personality which drove toward free government as surely as the magnetic needle seeks the pole. This widening of knowledge, and this uplifting of the consciousness (the two primary consequences of Jesus' viewpoint) necessarily issued in a third result: *Men were energized creatively, so that they multiplied inventions.* Thus, in the release of Jesus' Truth into history, we see both the explanation of modern times, and the reason why no one of mankind's earlier promises of social increase ever came through into anything of enduring significance. Here, then, is the philosophy of history: The life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus were necessary before human society could develop sufficient confidence in life and the universe to unfold its immense potentialities. Before Christ, therefore, there were great individuals, and great tyrannies; but there was not, and could not have been any particular increase of humanity's free, collective achievement and expression.

Having swiftly outlined the particular interpretation of history which we are maintaining, it is needful that we support it with some concrete historical data, that we observe a little more in detail the failure of contemporary viewpoints, and that we point out the one promising avenue of recovery open to modern men.

#### THE LONG STAGNATION OF HISTORY

No informed mind will question the statement that there was a long period of comparative stagnation in history; that this ended a scant half millennium ago; and that the achievements of the human race in this last half millennium surpass quite incomparably all the increase made before. Professor Arthur H. Compton, of Chicago University, wrote precisely this in his recent volume, *The Human Meaning of Science*. One does not, however, need to quote authorities. The fact, itself, is as assured as it is astonishing. The world Martin Luther knew in his childhood at Eisleben in the late fifteenth century differed little from the world Plato knew at Athens two millennia earlier, or that Moses knew at Thebes three millennia earlier. The probability is, one could go back much farther and still assert the same;

but the deficiency of our knowledge makes such comparisons uncertain. However, as far back as Moses' day, there was but little difference in the main structure of civilization as compared with that of Luther's day. Government, travel, implements, science, records, all had remained so much the same that Moses could have found his way around among the circumstances of Luther's Eisleben, with little either of astonishment or of need for asking questions. Make now the comparison the other way. Starting with Luther, think forward, and the difference between the fifteenth century and modern times is an abyss. Luther, coming to Berlin, London or New York, today, would find everything so different that he would be constantly asking questions, and would have great difficulty in finding his way around.

Facing now this amazing contrast, what can we propose as its explanation? Why was the world thus stagnant through long millennia? Clearly it was not because there had been no promises, for again and again there had been. Nevertheless, those promises never had come through into fulfillment. For example, there was quite early a beginning of political freedom in the forests of Germany; but it did not come through to anything of historical significance. There was similarly great, though futile, promise in early Roman republicanism, and in Greek democracy. Freedom, indeed, seems to have had many starts. Doubtless it is an intuitive human viewpoint; and yet for some reason it has always failed to accomplish anything of historic significance. Or, to say it more accurately, it did always so fail until after Jesus. Since His time, for some reason, history seems to have moved forward rather magnificently.

Just in this connection, nothing could be more revealing than the history of Greek freedom. It began about 508 B. C., and endured until overwhelmed by the military imperialism of Philip and his son, Alexander the Great. Greek freedom lasted, thus, about a hundred and seventy years. But we make a mistake if we suppose the freedom of those little Greek city states could be compared to our modern structures of poised free government. In the first place, Greek freedom was so narrowly established that it developed constant war. No less than ninety-three years, out of their total of one hundred and seventy, were spent in fighting. Still worse, of this nearly a century of Greek conflicts, by far the majority were wars of conquest. Indeed, the very best approach one could have to much of the moral thinking of ancient Greece would be to compare its leaders, such as Themistocles and

Alcibiades, with Hitler and Stalin; and to compare the free Greek point of view with the ruthlessness of modern Communism or Nazism. Themistocles and Alcibiades practiced lying as a matter of principle, and the people of Athens sent their armies quite without excuse to conquer and destroy the inhabitants of neutral Melos—a neighbor state. Having conquered Melos, the Greeks put its men to the sword, sold its women into slavery, and divided its wealth among themselves. Nor was this circumstance exceptional. The fact is, the moral average of free Greece was definitely low; and, as a consequence, Greek freedom never did develop that broad, poised strength we think of as free government.

But even more striking than the amazing failure of Greek freedom is the failure of Greek thought. From Thales, who began the evolution, to Aristotle, who crowned it, is scarce three hundred years; and yet in so short a time Greek intellectual effort began, achieved its majestic increase, and came through to conscious failure. Aristotle was succeeded by the skeptics, and these thinkers had quite surrendered all hope of arriving at truth. They were men who doubted both their own intellectual faculties, and the knowability of the universe.

Stand, now, over against this record of social failure, the more recent record of man's social increase achieved in relation to Jesus' Truth, and how marked is the contrast! Evidently, man in himself—man without divine reinforcement—cannot arrive.

This circumstance is the more remarkable when we stop to realize just how powerful is man's inner urge toward sublimity. For example, he sees red and yellow spilled across the evening sky, and insights within him transform those meaningless spots into an emotion of wonder—sublimity. Feeling thus, a man might even be lifted to some fleeting sense of destiny; and for one brief instance feel himself immortal. More than one man has had precisely this experience.

And so we glimpse, indeed, eternity, sublimity, truth, freedom; but we never stay there. No, we catch our vision, and begin; and then we get confused. The vision fades. Soon freedom, truth, and sublimity are lost amid the squalor of sin and littleness. The piled-up millennia of history almost lose, in fact, the promise of our bright beginnings, amid the stagnation of our long failure.

## THE TRUTH CHRIST TAUGHT AND WAS

Like our own high insights, and yet surpassing them, was the nobility of that vision which Jesus saw and lived and was, and which He called *The Truth*. By His manifold resources He projected this Truth into history; and it gave birth to a new civilization. Here are the factors. Evidently they are both natural and supernatural:

1. The revelational factor—He knew, lived, and spoke God's mind as the very finality of Truth.
2. The redemptive factor—He identified Himself with God's judgment of death upon human sin (the whole mass of man's piled-up sin-history), establishing, thus, forever, by dialectical expression, God's judgment upon sin, and His infinite redemptive love.
3. The victorious factor—He made manifest humanity's sure triumph over death, bringing near, as vivid fact, what had been before only remote and uncertain longing.
4. The creative factor—He commanded His living Spirit upon men, wherever their believing trust invited Him. In this way He changed the dimness and uncertainty of man's natural insight of God and sublimity into the vivid nearness of inner and creative certainty. The result was Christian experience—the experience of God become an inner Presence—a Fellowship. It was that something plus beyond Nature, which completed Nature. It was that reinforcement of the Divine, without which man's natural capacities never could have come through to destiny.

This total value is indeed Truth—truth spelled with a capital T: and the martyr Church made it a force in history. The foundations were laid between the years 30 and 330.

The missionary Church, the Church of Remigius, and Ulfila, of Columba and Augustine, of Cuthbert and Bede, of Boniface and Ansgar, gave to this message continental coverage between 330 and 1000.

Then, between 1000 and 1500, the Church of the great Schoolmen, Anselm to Aquinas, fashioned into a world philosophy what had been the inarticulate faith of the martyr centuries. And so the living God, revealed in Hebrew tradition, came to be seen as both the Creator and the Ruler of that orderly universe, discovered in Greek tradition.

When these things had been accomplished it was once again a "fullness of time"; and that religious, moral and intellectual upheaval known as the

Protestant Reformation, burst forth into history. This movement saw Truth richly, as Jesus had understood it. And it put a supreme valuation upon Truth, as also He did. It saw Truth as nothing less than the final meaning and glory of life. It lived for Truth; and as a consequence achieved a truth-centered civilization. It stood the preaching of the Word of God above sacraments. It made preaching the chief responsibility of Christian worship. The knowledge of the Word of God—of the whole Truth of God—came to be seen as so important that men stood out of doors for hours, and in the rain, to hear it preached. Armies marched in its name. Education for the masses was set down as fundamental to the pacification of Europe. The people of Leyden, a great Dutch city, put the worth of a university above such an economic privilege as that of being exempted from taxation. Men dared rulers for the sake of Truth. The family Bible became an essential instrument in connection with the organization of home life. Sunday was made a day apart, dedicated to the knowledge of Truth. Truth was the vocation of the clergy; and was also the responsibility of the laity. The entire Christian community looked upon Truth as its precious possession, its high trust. It was in the inclusiveness of this Truth that men saw the self-evident principles of free government, and felt themselves obligated to undertake their achievement. Justice was implicit in this Truth, and it became a national passion. Christian experience and Eternal Life were accepted as a part of the viewpoint of a civilization.

This was the world the Reformation produced. Nor is it surprising that America, which was so largely settled by men and women whose appreciation of these values was acute, found its free principles in this Truth. They saw those principles as a part of the very structure of the universe. It was Nature, and Nature's God who supplied to America the pattern of free government; and so the national Thanksgiving Day appeared—just a reasonable outgrowth of a whole civilization's point of view.

That a civilization so prepared for, and so nurtured, would develop powerfully, was merely something to be expected. Of course slavery was abolished! Of course reform followed reform! Of course parliamentary government—the natural instrument of an order which bases its authority in the consensus of a people's moral convictions and commitments—spread so rapidly that it seemed destined to girdle the earth! And such, widely, was the outlook of men when the twentieth century dawned.

## THE GREAT APOSTASY

But already a contrary force had been developed which was to undermine all this increase. It was man's glory of self. It found its occasion in the very magnitude of man's accomplishments as the servant of Truth. Man forgot his Lord, and became self-sufficient. He invented the absurdity of scientific naturalism. He left no room for God and revelation, or for his own free moral personality and eternal destiny. Magnifying his intellectual cleverness, he ensmalled himself. At last the littleness of his boasted learning shut every door against him, save only despair. Despairing, his motive to high achievement faltered; and every accomplishment of his recent glorious past was undermined and imperiled.

Of course this naturalistic, materialistic world outlook blossomed into pseudo idealisms: Humanism (idealism without the infinities); Communism (social unity without character, or God, or hope, or love); and Nazism (an even lower thing, that glorifies the pride of a single race, enslaving the rest). But now, it is the year 1941, and we are in the midst of the full impact of our wretched apostasy.

Does someone in amazement query, How has such a dreadful thing happened, even so? The answer is easy: The danger of just such false choosing is perpetually life's peril. Man's self-consciousness loves self-sufficiency, and resents the humility of faith. Speculative naturalism makes such an appeal to man's pride of ego that he does not hesitate at the absurdity of affirming the dependability of his physical senses and of his intuitive reason, while denying the dependability of his equally intuitive insight both of duty and of the infinities. The superficiality of making such a distinction between equally authoritative insights, accepting one and rejecting the other, ought to shock any really profound thinker; nevertheless, it has been frequently made. *Self, reason, and beauty* have been accepted as intuitive recognitions. *Conscience and the infinities* have been denied or explained away.

This false speculation, however, has been but one factor of our modern problem. Man's self-glory has promoted also a secular mood, and has caused his interest to be wholly centered upon material wealth, and the multiplication of sensations. And this secular mood, quite as truly as speculative naturalism, has been vastly destructive. The fact is, secularism and speculative naturalism are very closely related to each other. The

former is the attitude of self-sufficient and ungodly hearts when they are intellectually unconscious. The latter is their attitude when they are intellectually conscious.

Another circumstance also has worked against the former truth-centeredness of Protestant civilization. It is the widespread intellectual indolence of modern Christian men. In part, Christian men may have become discouraged. They may have turned away from serious reading because so many books were unchristian, and as a result disquieting to their faith. I am satisfied many men did give up practically all Christian intellectual activity for this reason. They retreated into their emotions. They almost entirely sacrificed the tremendous authority and appeal of rational truth. This timid and perhaps indolent practice has contributed very much to the decline both of Protestantism, and of free Christian civilization.

#### THE ROAD TO POWER AND VICTORY

These, I take it, are the principal factors which have produced our present crisis. A fourth one is the circumstance that the modern development of inventions and machinery had made necessary a moral advance just at the time when a decline of faith had so seriously undermined all moral authority. This acute difficulty, however, has only added to the intensity and immediacy of the modern problem, without helping to produce it: and so, without further discussion, we turn to the question of a solution.

How can we achieve once again a truth-centered civilization? How can men put Truth, in Jesus' full understanding of the word, back at the center of interest? The answer to this question can be most swiftly presented, and probably most clearly, by reducing it to a series of brief dogmatic paragraphs, as follows:

First, we must enlarge again our world view to comprise all of man's intuitive outlook upon reality, and as well, all of Jesus' sublime understanding of Truth. We must refuse to distinguish between the authority of intuitive reason and that of intuitive duty—between the authority of intuitive beauty and that of intuitive infinities. Or to put it differently, we must add to our sense-science, philosophy, and to our philosophy, religious faith; and we must recognize that failure to do this is simply unintelligent. It is a fact that the naturalistic point of view can be, at once, most learned, and yet

shockingly obtuse: consequently, the Christian man must be able to respect the former characteristic, while condemning unsparingly the latter. And it will help him the better to do this if he remembers that *religious faith* is, indeed, as Professor Harris Franklin Rall has said, *a man's right*, while *naturalistic unbelief* is simply *a man's negative choice*, and no more. Put it down, then, unbelief, wherever it appears, is just a personal choice. It cannot be an intellectual conclusion.

Second, we must make religion again, worship-centered; and we must make worship, preaching-centered. The preaching of the Word of God must become for men in the twentieth century what it was for their Protestant fathers from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. The free social exchanges of the church-school hour, with their questionable intellectual responsibility, cannot without almost certain disaster be accepted as the chief contact our growing youths are to have with the tremendous inclusiveness and profundity of Christian truth. One does not need to add that preaching-centered worship must be in fact, and not merely in name, *the preaching of the Word of God*. The pulpit is not the place for the exploitation of small private views, or contemporary speculations. In the pulpit a divinely inspired man speaks the verities of God's inclusive redemptive word in Christ: and to do less than this, is to betray a very great entrustment.

Third, the laity, as well as the clergy, must recover their sense of responsibility for the truth of God in Christ, their sense of responsibility not only to live consistent with that Truth, but also to know it in the sublime details of its inclusive world view. Knowledge of the Truth must thus replace wealth and pleasure as the chief interest of average men. Sense comfort, or even economic security, both of them must be seen as subordinate to this chief concern of Christian men. Evidently the one timeless value, rich in meaning both for this world and that which is to come, is the exalted experience of worship—*the adoring appreciation of God and His glory as made manifest in the truths of creation, of redemption, and of the mystery of Eternal Life*.

Alas, how insensitive we have been to it all! How utterly trivial has been our outlook! And we must get over it or be damned: for at the level of our senses, and of our limited sense-sciences, there is no possibility either of salvation or of *Eternal Life*.

Fourth, we must cut free from that intellectually irresponsible utopian-

ism which has supposed we could realize heaven's ultimate, absolute order in the midst of earth's relative circumstances. This idea has again and again betrayed us into exaggerating our responsibility for challenging men's consciences, and neglecting our more important service of expanding their minds and hearts. Whatever else is included in worship—and the challenging of men's consciences does have its place there—the most significant impression received in worship ought always to be a sense of the wondrous redemptive adequacy of God in Christ. Even when men are reproved and challenged by the gospel, if preaching be truly Christian, they will be comforted by it as well. And so every service of worship will become expansive, attractive, challenging, intellectually responsible. And so Protestantism will once again woo men both to the loveliness of worship, and to the blessedness of sonship.

Fifth, while we must cut loose from intellectually irresponsible utopianism, we must nevertheless face definitely and instantly the task of leading civilization into the next stage of social progress. Economic security is not, indeed, big enough to be the final goal of an advancing Christian civilization; but it most certainly is a necessary part of our present Christian outlook and task.

And as with economic security, so also with the question of war and peace. A complete repudiation of the use of force is not now the Christian man's social possibility; but the achievement of a federated world in which international order will be enforced by an adequate police power is not only his possibility, but his present pressing obligation.

#### IT IS THE HOUR

Finally, we pause just long enough to get an impression of the immense timeliness of an immediate movement for the recovery of such a truth-centered civilization. There is today a new sense that the gospel is man's only hope. In part this is due to our dawning recognition of the inadequacy of sense-science to attain to Jesus' ultimate Truth: and there is, indeed, such a recognition, one which is reflected in the most responsible of contemporary writings. Whitehead, Jeans, Eddington, Compton, et cetera, all have given expression to this view. Whitehead, specifically, has asserted just this in his *Science and the Modern World*.

Then, again, there is a growing assertiveness on the part of the leaders of faith. This proper assertiveness is finely expressed in Professor Rall's

phrase, *the right to believe*. Indeed, this phrase might well be taken as a formulation of the new mood of aspiring men. And literally, everywhere one turns, one meets it. Edwin Lewis, Reinhold Niebuhr, Edgar Brightman, Henry Van Dusen, Albert Knudson, John Baillie, William Temple, C. H. Dodd, Karl Heim, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, James Moffatt, Jacques Maritain, Alexander Mackay, all manifest it. Almost any recent volume by any one of these, as well as scores of other authors, gives expression to this new assertiveness of faith.

Also there is a new sensitiveness toward resurgent faith on the part of the common mind. *The Atlantic Monthly*, for November, 1940, carried an article by Bernard Iddings Bell presenting some detailed figures concerning the contemporary return to faith. He noted twenty-nine professors on one university campus, thirty-one on another, and literally thousands in English and American universities generally, who recently have made this significant intellectual journey. The same situation is beginning to be felt even among the masses—those who but yesterday had turned aside altogether both from religion and from all serious intellectual interest. These people, as well as the educated, are feeling the summons to larger things. Yes, a “fullness of time” has once again dawned. A great Christian forward movement is even now at the door.

*At the door*, indeed, and yet definitely, *outside*. It is a moment of majestic responsibility which has come, today, to Christian men of daring and devotion. And if we fail, how great indeed will be the blame: for it is Christian men alone who have any answer to the terrific confusion of these modern times.

What, then, shall we do? We are the heirs of the ages. The toil and devotion of prophets and apostles, of martyrs and confessors have come upon us. The men of other generations shrank from no sacrifice; and they did bear forward the gospel of God's redemptive love in Christ across multiplied crises of history. They placed the torch of Truth in our hands, as theirs were failing. How magnificent was their accomplishment! They transformed a pagan world, one which glorified brute power, and magnified tyranny; which despaired of truth, and lived only in sensations, into a world of advancing brotherhood, increasing freedom, enlarging science, multiplying inventions. They did this, and the world was moving surely toward its noble goal. We were the inheritors of the ages. And then our very success

intoxicated us. Our pride of accomplishment betrayed us into self-sufficiency. We diminished our Lord, and magnified ourselves. We displaced His Truth with our proud, superficial, sense knowledge. We substituted our natural Utopias for His supernatural Kingdom. But, alas, our dreams would not come true. Of ourselves, no more than our fathers before us, could we build the sublimities we all too dimly saw. It was the year 1940, and we awoke to it: and then out of the hell we had let loose into history we repented and turned back to the humility of faith.

Now once again, high opportunity confronts us; but it confronts us not as proud *modern men*. It confronts us rather as humble *Christian men*—men who joyously take their equal, lowly place beside all brothers of His grace. And so He leads us, both by the natural and the supernatural, into that inclusiveness of life and of knowledge and of meaning, which is at once His Truth, His Kingdom, and the consummation of history.

The majestic words of Christendom's most noble hymn express at once the humility, the inclusiveness, and the sublimity of the Church as being the historic witness to Jesus' infinite Truth:

“The glorious company of the apostles praise *Thee*.  
The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise *Thee*.  
The noble army of martyrs praise *Thee*.  
The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge *Thee*.  
• • • • • • • • • •

*Thou* art the King of Glory, O Christ.  
*Thou* art the everlasting Son of the Father.  
• • • • • • • • • •

O Lord, let *Thy* mercy be upon us as our trust is in *Thee*.  
O Lord, in *Thee* have I trusted; let *me* never be confounded.”

## The Small Sects and the Primitive in Religion

GEORGE BROCKWELL KING

SOME months ago I had occasion to make a fairly comprehensive study of the extent and work of the small sects which operate in Canada, just as they do in the United States. To further this study, I sent out a questionnaire addressed to ministers in the Manitoba Conference of The United Church of Canada. Much of what follows owes its origin to an analysis of the returns from this questionnaire. The study is significant, not because it covers one special geographic area, but because it uncovers many facts bearing on the technique, influence, and social background of the sectarians, and gives a chance to draw certain conclusions about the small sects everywhere.

Of the small sects operating in the particular section studied (Manitoba and the territory at the head of Lake Ontario) the most numerous are the Pentecostalists. They are the successors of the very similar Holiness Movement which took form in Ontario in the 1890's, probably from influences originating in the United States, under an ex-Methodist preacher named Horner. I once attended a meeting of his as a lad at the turn of the century, held in a small hall in the city of Belleville, Ontario. I do not remember any sermon—it may have been given before I arrived—but I do recollect that a dozen or more people were praying at once and the babel of sound that arose was almost unintelligible. Individuals would fall to the floor from time to time. They lay as they fell and the leaders apparently paid little attention to them. Horner himself strode up and down the one aisle of the little hall. He was redheaded, with powerful shoulders, and I think had been earlier a lumberjack. When some of us, in our desire to see more clearly what was happening on the platform, stood upon our seats, he approached, tapped the delinquents upon the shoulder, and said quietly, "Sit down, lads." A look at him, and we sat! The Holiness Movement eventually spread westward to Manitoba, where it made itself felt for a time at Crystal City, Carman, and elsewhere. The present Pentecostal Church was not taken account of in the population census of the Dominion of Canada

until the year 1911. It has had a remarkable growth, but the factors that made for that increase will probably not continue to operate with the same force.

There are also the Cooneyites, called the "Two-by-Twos" and "Go-Preachers." It is difficult to find out much about them, for on principle they do not publish books or tracts, even claiming that the Bible is a dead book unless made to live through the mouth of one of their preachers. The originator of the movement has been given as Mr. William Weir Irvine, or Erwin, a Scotchman, who went to Ireland at the close of the last century and engaged in evangelistic services in the south. He was subsequently joined by Edward Cooney, a strong personality, who gave his name to the sect that developed. The movement became, as so often in the history of such movements, one directed against all churches and systems, and its followers, though few in numbers, are now to be found in the country districts of Great Britain, Australia, and America. Their method of working is for two young women or young men to go out into the country and seek the one "worthy," exhorting those upon whom they call to live "the Jesus way," as taught in Luke 9. 1-5; 10. 1-9; Matthew 10. 5-42, as the indispensable condition of salvation.

Jehovah's Witnesses, known also as International Bible Students and Rutherfordites, as well as by their former name, Russellites, have been declared an illegal organization by the Canadian Government, on the ground that their work and teachings militate against the war effort. Previous to the placing on of this ban, they were a factor to be reckoned with, with their persistent house-to-house visiting, done singly or in pairs. Even since the ban was imposed upon them, members of the sect have risked fine and imprisonment by surreptitious distribution of their literature, and a number have been arrested and given prison sentences.

The Seventh-Day Adventists are here few in numbers, the presence of members of this sect probably being due more to immigration of actual members from the United States than to propaganda on their part. With reference to them, I am reminded of a story told me by a friend. An Adventist had approached him on the question of observing every seventh day as the Sabbath, and my friend asked him, "How would you observe that rule if you lived up at the mouth of the Mackenzie River, where there is six months' day and six months' night?" The Adventist considered the

question for a moment, and then, quick as a flash, an answer came to him. "God never intended that anyone should live in such a place!" he said.

There are, too, the British Israelites. This movement is not a sect in the sense of the others, in that its followers remain within the churches, where they constitute a potential, if not always active, divisive force. Its faith is easy of comprehension. "The present amazing world position of the Anglo-Saxon race, the British Empire, and the United States of America needs some explanation," and the answer is a simple one. It is just that "the Anglo-Saxon is, in the providence of God, the age-long *elected* race for the **BLESSING** and **SERVICE** of all mankind." In other words, the Anglo-Saxon race is the so-called "lost ten tribes" of Israel. That is what the British Israelites prove, to their own satisfaction at least, by naïve and childish interpretations of Biblical texts and by measurements of the Great Pyramid of Egypt. It is nothing to them that the "lost ten tribes" never were lost; they can furnish a chart of their wanderings from Asia across Europe until they settled in Britain! Christianity early in its history asserted, as against its Jewish opponents, that it was the inheritor of the promises and the true Israel. The emphasis upon that claim lessened when the struggle between Jew and Christian died away. The British Israelites make a similar assertion today, substituting the Anglo-Saxon race for the Christian Church. The type of "release" this faith furnishes its adherents merits more study.

It is interesting that so many of these sects owe their beginnings to very meagerly educated men and women. William Miller, to whose work Seventh-Day Adventism goes back, was a farmer, with only a country-school education. Charles T. Russell, founder of Jehovah's Witnesses, in his early career ran a men's furnishing store in Pittsburgh. His title of "Pastor" came to him later when he began to travel and lecture upon the results of his Biblical studies. Almost all the sects hold to a very fundamentalist view of the Bible. They have no conception of a development of revelation in the Scriptures. Their initial assumption is that the Bible offers a presentation of truth for the present day, to be taken literally as read. Their interpretation of the Scriptures, it is true, is their own, but one for which they claim divine guidance. As a result, they build their faith upon some very unorthodox interpretations of certain Scripture texts or emphasize some point of Christian doctrine which the regular churches have come to look upon as an aberration.

When, as the movements progress, they come up against facts of Christian history which militate against their views, their reactions are various. The Seventh-Day Adventists, for example, decry the honesty and standing of the early Church Fathers, for quotations from the writings of the latter threaten the Seventh-Day position. The Pentecostalists become students of the original Greek and try to show that Paul was really not opposing speaking with tongues when he said, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, . . . than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

Though they may get far away from their initial positions, it should be noted that some of these movements in their beginnings comprise a reaction to some harshness of Christian doctrine, re-emphasize some neglected doctrine, or express a hope which its exponents believe ought to be Christian. These points emerge even out of a wilderness of wild exegesis or extravaganzas. No sect material is simply balderdash. An honest effort to analyze it will reveal certain fundamental ideas that are worth noting. It is a truism that the heresy of today is the orthodoxy of tomorrow. So in the sect-thinking certain doctrines, unconsciously it may be, are struggling for expression which the churches might well evaluate rather than superciliously ignore.

Professor E. R. Dodds, in the July, 1940, issue of the *Harvard Theological Review*, points out that Euripides wrote his *Bacchae* under the influence of those Eastern religious ideas which in his latter days were pouring in upon Athens. Under the stresses of the Peloponnesian War the hard-won civilization of the fifth century B. C. was beginning to break, and the primitive religious ideas which were embodied in the Eastern mysteries were finding a welcome among the Athenians.

We face today a similar situation to that of Athens in the later years of the Peloponnesian War. A terrible war, and a period of so-called peace whose strain was worse than war; a prolonged depression and again war. Men and women, under all this stress, have lost faith in reason and progress and democracy, in the way of thinking and living which our fathers achieved with difficulty. Once again the way has been prepared for a revival of the primitive in religion.

For there can be no doubt but that much that appears in the small sects is a manifestation of primitive elements in religion that Christian progress has in general sloughed off. In the Winnipeg *Free Press* of August 6th last there was an account of a forty-eight-year-old nurse who was in a serious

condition in a hospital in Ohio through having been bitten by a copperhead snake at the height of a frenzied religious service, at which two men-members of the cult received lesser wounds. The pastor of the church declared that the nurse was bitten because "she didn't feel the power of the Lord" and that "we'll use snakes in our services whenever the Lord requires."

The use of these snakes is usually dismissed as based on Mark 16. 18 ("They shall take up serpents") or Luke 10. 19 ("Behold, I give into your power to tread on serpents and scorpions, . . . and nothing shall by any means hurt you"), these promises finding illustration in the story in Acts 28 of Paul's miraculous preservation from harm when bitten by a viper, and it is taken for granted that the followers of the modern snake cult are harking back to an element in the primitive Church which it soon outgrew. But Clement of Alexandria refers to snakes as used in the mysteries of his day. "The bacchanals," he says, "hold their orgies in honor of the frenzied Dionysus, celebrating their sacred frenzy . . . crowned with snakes." So too Arnobius: "The sacred rites themselves, and the ceremony of initiation even, named Sebadia, might attest the truth; for in them a golden snake is let down into the bosom of the initiated, and taken away again from the lower parts." In a strikingly similar manner do groups in the remote villages of Kentucky and elsewhere in the South make use of snakes. They may not believe in the divinity of the snake, nor have any knowledge why they perform their ritualistic acts with it, but something from their ancestral past tells them that it is an effective means in bringing on religious excitement.

A very primitive element in religion is the ecstatic rhapsodical experience connected usually with "speaking with tongues," upon which so great a value is placed by the Pentecostal and similar sects. A vivid description of the phenomenon as it occurs today has been furnished me by a competent observer who was present during a series of camp meetings conducted in the summer of 1939 on the shores of a small lake in the Province of Manitoba:

"An evangelist from Nebraska, assisted by several Pentecostal preachers, was in charge of the camp. After preaching 'hell-fire' for an hour, sinners were urged to come to the front. There was a call to prayer. That was the signal to begin. Scores of people flung themselves on the floor of the tent, singing, moaning, crying, screaming, or laughing hysterically. From a distance the sound would remind one of a loading platform. On Friday evenings they announced 'faith healing' and called on all suffering from cancer, tuberculosis, rheumatism, et cetera, to come forward for the healing touch. They came in droves. In order to observe the technique of the evangelist, I answered the call with some thirty others. Some came forward

to be healed and others for the baptism of the Spirit. He must have known my purpose, for he passed me by. The evangelist came down from the platform and called for helpers; several men and women responded. Hymn singing was continued throughout the whole proceedings without interruption. The evangelist started at the top of the row. In the hollow of his hand was a bottle of 'anointing oil.' At each side of the person to be healed or blessed stood an assistant, and at the rear, ready to break the fall, was a stalwart follower. While the assistants sang, prayed, laughed, or yelled, the evangelist, with face close to the candidate, shouted over and over again, 'In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.' I noticed that most of the women collapsed at the beginning of the ceremony. The men required a longer period of time. When they had fallen to the straw-strewn floor of the tent, an over-coat or wrap, apparently carried by the candidates for that purpose, was thrown over them, and the evangelist proceeded to the next in line. Some candidates began immediately to utter incoherent sounds, while others 'frothed' at the mouth. One man remained motionless for over two hours. Strange to say, at the end of that time he arose, apparently none the worse for his experience, shook hands with the attendant, and went home. Some of the followers have a craving for the experience, and whenever the opportunity presented itself were prepared to go through the ordeal again. I noticed one man in the group presented for 'Baptism of the Spirit' who had been 'in line' on previous occasions. He was ignored by the evangelist. He prescribed a season of prayer. Half a dozen followers prayed with and for the man. I saw him begin to wilt when a handsome young lady attendant put her arms on his shoulders. Presently they placed him in line again. I was close at hand and heard the evangelist whisper to his chief assistant: 'Leave him. We can't put him over.' He was left unconquered. Nearing the end of the campaign I met this man again, his stalwart form stooped and his eyes hollowed. I was told that he had just passed through the experience of being baptized by the Spirit."

This is an emphasis which has come to the front again and again in the Christian Church. The Irvingite movement which arose in England over a century ago had its "prophets," "revelations," "tongues," "gifts." John Wesley encountered the phenomenon in his meetings and was disturbed by it, as he records in his *Journal*. The Montanist movement, which gave grave disquiet to the early Church for a time from the second century on, similarly stressed visions and tongues. Eusebius quotes an anonymous opponent of the Montanists as saying of Montanus, "He lost control of himself, and falling suddenly into a sort of frenzy and ecstasy he raved and began to babble and utter strange things, prophesying in a manner contrary to the constant custom of the Church handed down by tradition from the beginning" (*Hist. Eccl.* V. 16).

Those who give such a large part in their services to ecstatic emotional experiences find their justification in the account in Acts 2, where the apostles

are referred to as speaking "with other tongues." They equate this phenomenon with the "speaking with tongues" about which Paul has so much to say in 1 Corinthians 14. Paul's evident depreciation of it they attempt to soften down by subtle interpretation which removes the sting of it, to their own satisfaction at least.

There is no doubt that we are here dealing with a phenomenon which goes back far beyond the book of Acts. It finds an illustration in the Old Testament in the incident of Saul among the prophets recorded in 1 Samuel 10. Professor S. H. Hooke, in his most valuable little book, *Prophets and Priests*, points out that when Saul met the prophets he was seized with the same ecstatic efflatus as they and underwent a change which fitted him for his new task of military leader. He also refers to the fact that there was a class of "god-possessed" priests among the Babylonian priesthood and that the early Egyptian story of Wen-Amon shows us that the phenomenon of ecstasy prophecy was known at the court of a Phoenician king. The bands of ecstasies in Israel were evidently not held in high esteem by people in general, for the proverb which took its rise as a result of Saul's action, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" appears to be one uttered in derision. Professor T. R. Robinson, in his *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel* (page 31), constructs a picture of the phenomenon of ecstasy in religion as it showed itself in early Israel which is substantially the same as that among the Montanists and among modern devotees of the cult. The phenomenon wherein the individual lets down the inhibitory bars to the expression of his emotions is, therefore, no new thing, being distinctly a primitive trait in religion.

There was a revival of prophetic inspiration in the early Church, when again the experience of the prophet was offered for the guidance of the young community. Paul placed a great deal of importance upon the prophetic gift, evident in the fact that he put the prophet next to the apostle. He, however, placed the showy gift of tongues last in order of value. In this he has pointed the way for us. We may rightly deprecate the stress upon signs and wonders among the small sects, but what is really behind the mistaken importance given to them, the claim of the prophet that God can still speak immediately to His people, the Church can lose sight of only at the peril of loss of power.

This view of the sects as representing a revival of the primitive in

religion whenever conditions are ripe for it should not lead us to the hasty conclusion that nothing can be done about it. That is to deny all the advance we have made in religion and all the new insights, as we have progressed from nature worship and fetishism to the pure monotheism of our Christian faith. It should lead us instead to the determination that despite the social, economic, and political upheaval of the present day, we will hold the gains in religious insight that our fathers and we have made. The future is with the regular churches if—and I would stress the *if*—they do not allow themselves to settle down into comfortable middle-class smugness, if they maintain an aggressive program and, forgetting their fear of the unconventional, recapture some of the values of the pioneer religion of our fathers which we too easily let go because we thought we had grown up and beyond them.

What specific measures can we take to meet the encroachments of these erratic sects and at the same time fill the needs that make their work possible? A variety of measures suggest themselves:

1. First and foremost, the regular churches should see to it that their rural territory is fully covered by their evangel and so leave no room for other organizations to come in on the neglected “fringes.” Investigation will show that the small sects operate successfully on the neglected parts of the rural charges of the larger denominations. It may be a point served only in the summer months by a student; a charge abandoned or little visited by a regular minister; or the scattered settlers of an outlying area. The point is that isolation leaves the way open for the acceptance of anyone who essays to break its numbing influence. Consolidation of rural charges has been carried too far in some instances and has made it physically impossible for our ministers to cover in any adequate way their wide fields. Full remedy will not come until the whole Church is roused to meet the needs and provides sufficient home mission funds to make complete service possible. The situation could be met in large part if the churches would move faster toward themselves answering Christ’s prayer “that they may be one.” There are points, for example, in the American and Canadian West where three or more of the regular denominations persist in maintaining work where one man, receiving adequate remuneration, could serve the field. In time of war, politics are largely forgotten and the nation fights as one man. In the struggle against secularism which threatens their very existence, the churches fight with ranks still unclosed. Even as the situation is, something may lie

at hand to do. Several years ago the Pentecostalists moved in on one of our Western summer mission fields after the student belonging to one of the larger denominations left in the fall, won over to their cause several of the best families in the locality, organized a permanent work, and brought about a disastrous split in a community which had previously been a unit religiously. After that, for several years, nearby laymen of the denomination in question supplied the mission pulpit after the student's departure to college. That was closing the barn-door after the horse was stolen, but it does suggest the possibility of utilizing the services of laymen and young people in meeting the needs of outlying points.

2. Let us seriously ask ourselves whether we have not gone too far in ruling out emotion from religion. One of the appeals of the small sects in country and city is to those people who find the services of the regular churches lacking in warmth and fellowship. Someone has described the Pentecostal groups as "refugees of the emotionally starved," who because of economic circumstances have not the outlets for their emotions that lie at hand for the more prosperous. Not being able to find that outlet in normal quarters, they respond most readily to the invitation that the Pentecostal group offers to find it in religious exercises. In our reaction to this unrestrained emotionalism we have made religion a cold and intellectual thing, for some people at least. It is true that emotional experiences that are indulged in for the "kick" that is in them can be a positive evil. But that should not blind us to the fact that worship involves a deep emotional experience and that only when the emotions are stirred do that conviction and action follow which should be the end of all religious experience. Informality and freedom marked the old prayer meeting, once a feature of church life, but now so largely abandoned, because it appeared no longer to serve the needs of the majority of people. But it did act as a safety valve for a group within our churches who feel a sense of constriction in the more formal and ornate church service, and for that reason it ought possibly to have been retained or be restored.

3. In the opening message of His ministry in the synagogue of Nazareth Jesus proclaimed that He had been anointed "to preach good tidings to the poor." The Church that loses its social passion is faithless to its Founder and Lord. The appeal of the small sects in country and city is to the frustrated, the economically dispossessed, whose numbers have been

increased in recent years owing to the financial stringency. These sects have had striking success within a certain area in our cities. Time and again they have taken over a downtown church, abandoned or on the point of abandonment by one of the larger denominations, and have filled it at once to overflowing. They have found a response, not alone among the less educated, but to a degree in the cities among our young people, who find in their meetings some release for those emotions and energies which have been denied expression in healthy and happy employment and in the legitimate amusements that employment would make possible to them. In the cities there are to be found larger masses of the discontented and unsatisfied, whose very numbers make them more susceptible to the arts of mass psychology practiced by the leaders of the sects than is the case in rural points. These sects have practically no social message or program as that is understood by the larger churches. They make little attempt to solve or meet social problems as problems. According to their doctrine, the future will see the ills and wrongs of the present world righted to the benefit of their believers and followers. Their sole work, therefore, is the dissemination of their peculiar beliefs, and their enthusiasm in this regard leads them out into widespread foreign missionary work, in which they often put to shame the older churches by their sacrificial giving. The churches must meet the situation created by the economic and social changes of our day with a gospel of redemption, not alone for the individual, but for society as well. Those who turn to the small sects are ill-adjusted and starved personalities whom the Church should be able to help to an individual adjustment to life as satisfying as that offered to them in the sect-theology, and—what the sects do not do—to a satisfying social adjustment to their environment as well. There are inner and social forces that move men to action, and the Church's techniques in approaching the problem of the men and women under its care should be based upon a study of living men and women of all types and conditions.

4. The small sects stress the doctrine of the soon Coming of Christ. That was the doctrine of the early Church. The circumstances of history forced the Church early to revise its emphasis upon the doctrine, but it did not let its values go. Like Mark and Paul, it maintained that with the advent of Jesus on earth, the Kingdom *had* come, potentially and actually. Or, like John, it asserted that Jesus had never gone away. Let us keep the

Kingdom and its coming as a living and vital hope before our congregations, a hope that depends for its consummation upon the co-operation of the followers of Christ with the God of truth and justice and right.

5. We have failed in another matter in which the small sects can teach us. The old-time revivalism sought decision. It reached out for it by methods which the average congregation of today would not tolerate. We have so stressed the fact that a child may grow up naturally in the Christian life, with no conscious break in that growth, that we have forgotten that adults, young and old, may wander off into "a far country," from which they can only return by an act of decision on their part. Our ministers do a magnificent job of "selling" the Christian way of life to their hearers—everything but having them "sign on the dotted line." The groups of the Pentecostal type do not make that mistake. They call for decision for Christ, and get it.

6. Where members of the older churches have definitely gone over to a sect, practically nothing can be done. But much can be done to inoculate against the virus those not already infected. Our church constituencies can be educated ahead of time in the aims, doctrines, and history of these sect-movements and in the philosophy out of which they spring. Such information acts as a shock absorber, and experience proves that where a people have been thus educated they take little notice of the sects when they attempt entrance into the community.

7. As a rule, it does not pay to attack the leaders of any sect-movement that has invaded a territory. That is only to make martyrs of them. There are always those who are ready to champion the cause of anyone whom they think has been set upon. Yet there may be times when a frontal attack must be made. In such a case, however, the campaign should be well planned and the attack a thorough and vigorous one. I am reminded of a situation which developed some years ago in one of our Western Canadian cities when a fundamentalist group, preaching the doctrine of the premillennial coming of Christ, met with such success that the whole church constituency of the city showed signs of disturbance. The situation was only finally met when the minister of one of the larger churches took direct issue with the sectarians and in a series of vigorous sermons attacked their positions. His efforts did not put an end to the movement entirely, but they did result in isolating it and shutting it off from further encroachments upon the regular churches.

The Rev. D. M. Canright, who was for twenty-eight years a Seventh-Day Adventist, and for over twenty years a successful minister of that denomination, in his book, *Seventh-Day Adventism Renounced* (pages 32-33), tells pastors that people are led into Adventism from lack of information. He advises pastors, when Adventism enters a town, to preach on the subject and to visit their people diligently, answering their questions on the subject and supplying them with reading material. He adds the interesting comment that people like to have notice taken of them and are as often won to Adventism by the attention they receive from its advocates as by their arguments. What Mr. Canright says about Adventism will apply to any of the small sects.

8. Our congregations should be given clear teaching on the origin and history of the Bible. Every minister ought to have in his possession, or available to him, a set of lantern slides on "How We Got Our Bible," and should repeat the talks which he gives upon the subject to his church groups at regular intervals. If our Protestant people were furnished adequate knowledge upon the history of those Scriptures which form the basis of our faith, together with instruction as to its right interpretation and use, they would be immune to much of the aberrant interpretations and handling of the Bible indulged in by the small sects.

9. The danger presented by the sects will be mitigated in large degree if the Church moves toward making religious instruction a part of the general education of our youth, incorporated in an educational program carried out on weekdays. Our state and provincial educational authorities are beginning to stress this—a decided change in attitude and theory—and the churches should not allow to go by this golden opportunity of making religious education correspond with the boundaries of the school system. In respect to this, unity among the churches as to program and methods will not only be desirable but necessary. In the religious education work of the local church use can be made with good results of such organizations as the Home Department of the Sunday school. Experiment has shown that this department can serve admirably the outposts of our rural fields, and it is work especially adapted to a consecrated lay-woman.

10. We must learn to employ the printed word more fully. Lyman Beecher, in the religious controversies which engaged him in the first quarter of the last century, made extensive use of tracts, organizing a group of

writers at New Haven for the work of "writing down," as it was called. In his *Autobiography* he quotes with approval a sentence of Voltaire, "We *must* be read." The small sects make large use of 2-page, 4-page, and 8-page leaflets which sell for 15, 30, and 40 cents per hundred. The regular churches must do more than they have done of the same type of publishing, issuing leaflets with attractive titles and of such character that the ordinary members of our congregations will want to read them. Such material will serve a double purpose: it will not only provide information on these various movements, but it will build up our membership in the faith.

The small sects will flare up whenever the conditions of society, or wherever the conditions of society, provide ground for them. The Church must be in the vanguard, then, of those who work for economic justice and opportunity for all men. These other movements can go forward only when the Church gives over the offensive and values ease at home more than crusade abroad. The program of the Church must be a comprehensive one and no part of it must be neglected. "Vigilance is the price of safety," and the best defense is an offense.

## Religious Education—A Job for Parents

WESNER FALLAW

**I**F YOU were a Sunday-school pupil before the First World War your home was predominantly Bible-conscious and perhaps also religious language-conscious. Family devotions used the terminology of saintly living, and conversation was generously supplied with Biblical quotations. Figures of speech from sacred literature were a part of almost any piece of first-rate current writing.

However, all this religious language and family participation in forms of devotion to God did not exactly produce modern-day saints. Adults today know themselves for what they are: men and women definitely more than a little lower than the angels. But what that religio-cultural heritage did accomplish was to make many of us keen for the idea of providing religious training for the generations now growing up. Of course there are some whose overdose of authoritarian religion developed in them hatred and disavowal of formal religion. But even they begin to seek the fold of the divinely assured again—at least for their children.

Nor is it merely the socially acceptable thing to see that children attend Sunday school. A significant number of parents consider religious training essential to the proper upbringing of children. The parents who neglect this inner sense of obligation to the young seldom escape an uneasiness and restlessness which moves them to do something—though the doing be no more than a sleepy Sunday morning growl to the dilatory children that they hurry off to Sunday school.

Thus is gained an easing of conscience after plans are set going to tutor children in the admonitions of the Lord. Parenthetically, a good case might be made out to show how even the adult who will have none of this admonition in his child's life nevertheless also experiences a religiously motivated unease. But this paper is addressed to the people who do believe that children need religion. As a working classification we might divide parents into three groups: (1) the vaguely religious; (2) the venerating religionists; (3) the vitally religious.

## THE VAGUELY RELIGIOUS

By this is meant all those parents who merely sense that a needed aspect of child development is supplied by religious instruction and participation on the part of the young in organized religion. Organized religion for them means that John and Mary must go to Sunday school every Sunday morning and profit by their association with teachers and other children who are in some fashion engaged in learning Bible stories, memory verses, hymns, how to help the poor people and how to worship the God associated with a church building.

It may be that this kind of parent never goes to church himself, or perhaps he does attend at Christmas and Easter. It's the thing to do. It brings back childhood memories; in some way serves to pay tribute to the memory of the old folk who have crossed into the unknown. At times it provides an added content for the holiday experience which would be esthetically or socially lacking by failure to observe the Christian seasons by going to church.

Vaguely religious homes do not provide much or any organically religious life. The child fails to learn that Bible truths might have meaning for what a person does in the home and in society. The God respectfully mentioned by the Sunday-school teacher is the God respectfully avoided at home—or is a name employed for purposes of vehement language.

It would seem obvious that homes like this are a rootless, groundless, arid climate, nonproductive of religious learning and growth no matter what may be the virtue of the Sunday-school experience. Add to this the fact that the highly successful Sunday-school teacher, superintendent, or director of religious education is the exception in teaching and conducting worship services that transform and guide thought and action. This gives a fairly realistic picture of the unlikelihood of the child's finding affinity with Enoch who, be it remembered, walked with God. In short, the adequate church training program is a rare article. Even more rare is the ideal program.

But let it be granted that the child from a vaguely religious home does sometimes have vital church training extraordinarily effective in teaching the Bible, connecting Book-truth with day to day action, pointing the way to positive Christian living and undergirding growing youth as a guide and stay in every crisis connected with modern life. All this is not enough.

## THE VENERATING RELIGIONISTS

There is a second group of parents who may or may not themselves be active in church life. Perhaps they think reverently of the Bible stories which as children they heard; the hymn tunes they once sang right gladly; the devotion of their own parents to the old parson, the house of God, and the Book they heard read daily at breakfast or bedtime. All this belonged to an age not yet secularized. Those were the days before the good things of life crowded in to make remote attainment of the truly Good Life. And for those days the spiritually-orphaned modern adult may unconsciously or admittedly long with a thirst more consuming than that of the lonely-hearted Psalmist who compared himself to the hart craving the water brooks.

These are the parents shocked to genuine pain by reports that modern children romp through the church building with the speed of urchins headed for free seats in football bleachers. Laments intersperse meetings of deacons and elders; laments that repeat the refrain: "No reverence, no reverence." Of course these same church officials may concurrently have children in the Sunday school whose deportment belies possibility of their having been taught at home or elsewhere that once inside a church house the proper procedure calls for silence and an uncovering of the head. But this does not diminish the conviction of the elders that it's up to the Sunday-school teacher, the director of young people's work, the minister, or somebody, to teach the child that holy ground exists as surely as when Moses walked beside his desert bush.

Unfortunately the somebodies have been as negligent in this teaching as have the church elders—the same people who often are home elders, being parents.

The irony of this neither lessens the correctness of the elders' desire that children learn to reverence the house of God, the Bible, the personality of teachers and other children, nor lessens the fact that this reverence cannot be learned until the Sunday school as a learning situation is expanded to include the home as the most effective setting for teaching religious values.

Let it be confessed that many ministers and most directors of religious education in Protestant churches have been as deficient in this duty as have ineffectual modern homes, baffled by a radically changing code and tactic for child-adult relations.

Hypothetically let us say that here is a church well staffed with ministers and lay workers who, though willing to pursue a course of experimental as opposed to superimposed authoritarian education, yet hold that children must be taught that there are areas of life too sacred for their untrammeled (though most times unconscious) profanation. Patiently, clearly, firmly, the workers of this church seek to impart to the minds and hearts of the young the ability to differentiate between the sacred and the profane. The children of this sort of church, through intelligent teaching and opportunity for practicing their newly-acquired behavior patterns, come to regard the church house as a place for quiet meditation. For them the Bible becomes a reservoir of story, poetry, myth, history and allegory for thoughtful consideration as a guide for life. And perhaps still more important, these young people grow into capacity for reverencing personality, regarding every person as a part of the divine plan for building the Blessed Community.

But these ideals can seldom become actuality if the church setting is the only means for their implementation. It is precisely at this point that the home as an essential educative agency is recognized for what it is. For, when all is said and done, the influence of the home exceeds the influence of all other agencies. That is trite, but forgotten; worn thin, but still the most durable axiom one can summon by which to measure and correct present-day religious training.

#### THE VITALLY RELIGIOUS

No academic definition of the phrase, The Vitally Religious, can suffice. Perhaps a sort of inverted analogy can.

Parents interested in having their children gain information and appreciation of art are not so shortsighted as to imagine that all that is necessary is to send the children to an art class for one hour a week. But suppose such parents could be found. They will say to you that they want John and Mary to know and produce art, and to that end arrangements are made with a reputable art school. Perhaps the children come at the appointed hour—or maybe they come every other week—or on the days mother hasn't forgotten and taken them off to the movies. They do not practice sketching during the week. They lose their paper and crayons. They can seldom be persuaded to settle down for a quiet study of some great masterpiece which the teacher enthusiastically presents. They never show up for the announced trip to an art gallery. They are disrespectful to

artists who visit the class. They boast that their father and mother never fool around with art, that their home is barren of all pictures and that nobody there ever reads a book on art or artists.

This is an insane portrayal of parents wanting art in the lives of their children. And that is just about the inept picture of the vaguely religious parents who say they want religion in the lives of their children. As the art-loving home enriches conversation with pertinent references to art and shows by direct and indirect methods that art-appreciation is a goal for that home, so must the religiously-aware home use multiple means for weaving religious language and values into day to day family intercourse.

This is no plea for stuffy or stereotyped Biblical phrases associated with the manner of parsons and deacons gone with a dead era. Neither does it call for a mere mouthing of pietistic sentiments. What is suggested is that parents should know the subject of next Sunday's church-school lesson and discuss its implications around the dinner table or at some other suitable time; and that they conduct this discussion with as much factual intelligence and naturalness as if discussing last Saturday's football game. It should be added that before parents can do this they must readjust their own lives to show by attitude and act that religious values are not for talk alone but, more important, are working principles to be brought to bear on every personal, business, and social contact. Just as parental espousal of art is vain when parents show that they themselves have no feeling for art, so must parents realize that religion is a vain thing in that home in which Scripture is quoted as a parlor exercise or a childish hangover, but in which there is inconsiderate faultfinding and where unethical business practices are condoned rather than condemned.

The vitally religious parent has not a doubt but that his intellectual sharing of church tradition and Biblical knowledge must be complemented by teaching by innuendo. This sort of parent knows the full worth of teaching by attitude, the power of silent example, the contagion of a consuming zeal for reverencing God and loving one's fellows enough to think first of them and then of self. And he knows too that his home must not stop at being a part of the total learning situation provided for the child, but must become the center of religious attitudes before the church school can become the headquarters for effectively imparting religious information.

The idea behind the attempted change of title, Sunday school, to

church school, aimed at expanding religious training from the brief Sunday morning assembly and class periods to include weekday learning through boys' and girls' church clubs, religious drama, and the like. Religion was supposed to become a seven-day-a-week enterprise. That was all to the good. But the homes which are vitally religious have long since understood that the Sunday school will not become the church school until mothers and fathers get seriously busy about the task of creating in their family groups a climate of opinion making for the sway of minds fixed on God.

How effective then, can the church school be? The answer has been thought to lie with the organized church. In part it does, but in a larger measure it rests on the home.

#### CONCLUSION

Religious education of children is good or bad in remarkable proportion as religious understanding is good or bad among parents. Parents themselves are aware of this and are not happy about their deficiencies as religious teachers. One may hope that their unhappiness will motivate increased study in religious literature and wider participation in service rendered in the name of the Master.

Traditionally, parents have looked to the church for guidance in family life, but since the First World War the public school has supplanted the church in setting standards for old and young alike. What is needed is that parents exercise intelligent discrimination so as to use both the school and the church as aids in training children, rather than completely relying on either. When the family unit is no longer basic, the individual and society suffer. The family *is* of basic value, socially, ethically, religiously. It must preserve and increase this value by growth in the kind of religion which links children and adults in mutuality expressed when selfless love is central.

# The Menace to China Missions

## A Layman's View

ESSON M. GALE

CHINA has been, and remains, the greatest mission field in the world and the story of missions in China, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, is one of heroism, persistence and achievement. But unless the present course of events undergoes unexpected changes, the American missionary will be called upon somehow or other to reconcile, if he can, American political and social ideals, which preserve "the blessing of liberty," with the imposition of Japan's current ideologies upon large parts of China. The principal seaports, the navigable rivers, important sections of the railways, and some of the large interior cities are under the influence of Japan, subject only to the annoyance and damage of guerilla attack. Farther afield, the creation of a vast Asiatic sphere, in which Japan would be dominant, is within range of realization. Only the halting of totalitarian aggression throughout the world will stop Japan's aggrandizement. The impressive American religious and cultural stake established in China is definitely menaced by the unfolding of this program.

Conspicuous in missionary achievement in China have been the colleges, some now universities of the first order, for both men and women students, developed chiefly under American auspices in many important centers of China. Even such government institutions as Nanyang College (now Chiaotung University) at Shanghai and Peiyang at Tientsin, were organized by the eminent American missionary-educators John C. Ferguson and Charles D. Tenney. In time the Methodist University (now Yenching) at Peking, St. John's at Shanghai, Canton Christian College (now Lingnan) at Canton, Boone (now Central China) at Wuchang, and West China Union at Chengtu, developed into great liberal institutions of higher learning admirably organized by American missionaries and teachers. These colleges have exerted a determining influence upon the form and direction of the modern Chinese mind. St. John's University at Shanghai, for example, produced so many graduates with ensuing careers of distinction in public service that a political group, powerful for a time in China's affairs both at home and

abroad, was designated after its name "the St. John's clique." The Peking Union Medical College, heavily endowed by the Rockefeller interests, is the outgrowth of earlier missionary efforts and is officially Christian.

Under the remarkable quickening of Christianity in the nineteenth century, Americans of their own accord had crossed the Pacific to devote themselves to the spiritual regeneration, as they viewed it, of the Chinese people. They added to this, efforts toward social reform and reconstruction. In every field of endeavor they succeeded greatly beyond expectations. After the turn of the century, missions in China entered upon their Augustan age. The inherent xenophobia of the Chinese, which had expressed itself in anti-missionary movements in the Yangtze valley, had ceased.

The persecutions and massacres of 1900, brought about by political aggression by the European powers, were quickly forgotten. The missionary and his good works had come to be accepted gladly, if not to the extent of wholesale embracing of the foreign religion itself, by the Chinese masses. Numbers of Chinese students, men and women, mostly Christians and products of the mission schools, were sent overseas to secure the benefits of a training in America itself. Within little more than two decades of the overthrow of the Manchu monarchy, the nationalist revolution of 1926-27 liquidated the last of the Confucianist war lords. With this the American educated Chinese came into full authority. In the ensuing ten years American cultural hegemony in China had been achieved. This represented one of the most amazing transformations since the Christianizing of trans-Alpine Europe.

But with the shots which rang out at the Marco Polo Bridge on the night of July 7, and the fatal Friday the 13th of August, 1937, at Shanghai, a new and ominous era opened. Gradually but relentlessly overspreading China is a far different spirit, that of present-day Japan. A government entirely sympathetic with American missions, for in fact its personnel largely owed its training to American mentors, is being displaced in large areas of the country by a power with a totally different political ideology.

The largely military type of Japan's political organization, as expressed particularly in her colonial governance in Korea and Formosa, and in Manchoukuo, is a natural development from the nation's historic backgrounds. Japan has been in all times a feudalistic political entity. It has only been in the past fifty years that civilian elements have been permitted to occupy for

short periods the center of the political stage. These national characteristics of the Japanese have grown out of their racial experience as they have maintained an insular existence. The system characteristic of society in Japan has been made vocal by the Shinto theologians and their military followers, now to be combined into an adaptation of the much admired *Weltanschauung* of the totalitarian states of Europe.

Japan's essentially Asiatic political philosophy has come into violent contact with the American societal point of view introduced into China originally by the missionary and borne to full fruition in the education of thousands of Chinese in the United States. The urgent questions are: Will the American missionary be forced to abandon this "vested interest" of his in China; must he abdicate his position of special leadership among the Chinese people, gained in the course of a hundred years of unremitting devotion and self-sacrifice; will he be obliged to accept henceforth for himself the limited role he knows his colleagues are restricted to in Japan itself, in Chosen and in Manchoukuo?

The weakness of the democracies has been that their acute dissent from the ideologies of the totalitarian states has blinded them to the formidable nature of their adversaries. They have continuously underrated them. When the test of war came, it was the democracies which were found wanting. Disapproval of Japanese policies in China has inspired notions that Japan has been about to collapse economically, that her armies were "bogged down" on the continent, that her occupying forces will be "absorbed" by the Chinese. Within the current three and a half years at least, such prognostications have failed to materialize, despite the dissipation of much of Japan's wealth in the war. With the present developments in Europe and their repercussions upon the Far East, which have vastly extended Japan's occupation of both insular and continental Asia, there appears even less likelihood of the near fulfillment of such wishful thinking.

The historic panorama of over three hundred years of Christian missions in China places the accent on the passing nature of even the current Far Eastern conflict. The Christian propagandist will never be in a position successfully to meet the reprisals of whatever secular authority may come into control of large parts of China. It thus behooves missions leadership to adopt, as it has in past crises, a statesmanlike attitude. A position should be considered which looks into the future, whereby, whatever hap-

pens, mission organizations may remain on the ground to continue such aid and succor as the Chinese people will need.

In the past thirty years there has been witnessed a kaleidoscopic procession of governments in China. An unreckoning adherence to a particular governing group would in many instances have proven highly injurious to American missionary prospects. History bears witness to this tendency mistakenly to exalt some ephemeral authority. For a time the bloody and profane Taiping rebels were regarded as the harbingers of a Christian dominion in China. They enjoyed enthusiastic support from certain missionary quarters overeager to proclaim the kingdom of Christ in China. Finally their true character was disclosed. Not many years ago a certain Chinese militarist was hailed as the "Christian general." Extravagant hopes were entertained of his potency in native Christian circles. His admirers suffered disillusionment. Happily innumerable Chinese remain faithfully in the Christian experience.

But American missions have too large a responsibility to the Chinese nation *as a whole* to attach themselves rigidly to special individuals or groups, to the cost of their nationwide and permanent influence. This is by no means to advocate a policy of defeatism, but one making for the largest spiritual and material usefulness in the greatest emergency experienced by China in modern times. Missions need not fear the charge of supinely yielding to mundane forces against the dictates of loyalty and conscience. Their record is too clear. As Professor Latourette, historian of missions, has said, "Repeatedly (missionaries) have protested against the ruthless exploitation of non-European peoples. . . . Often at the cost of unpopularity they have championed the cause of the oppressed and the downtrodden."

The very magnitude of missionary enterprise in China should insure its power and continuity, if its leadership adopts policies which farsighted wisdom dictates. At the moment of their greatest extent and activity in China, missions representing a complete cross section of Protestantism involved between five and six thousand workers from overseas, and from half to three quarters of a million communicants. To this must be added the Catholic congregations of four thousand clergymen and between two and a half and three million native adherents. Statistical calculations fail, however, to disclose the real potent force exercised by native converts, who throughout the land occupy in public and private life the most determining positions. The

influence of the Protestant missions in education, hospitalization, famine—and, in the past three years, war-relief work of all kinds—is out of all proportion to the number of actual professing Chinese Christians. Added to this foreign and Chinese working fellowship, are the vast numbers of church-going folk, particularly in America, who have personally identified themselves with the work of missions in China through financial contributions and spiritual co-operation.

Generations of Americans, and of course nationals of other countries, have counted an interest in foreign missions an inspiring factor in their lives. Powerful in all truth is such support behind missions in whatever role they may be called upon to play in China. It is, after all, such a situation calling for a present diplomacy of a high order for which the Church leaders *in partibus* often enough have shown their capacity in the past. Christian forbearance is dictated by considerations of the ultimate good. Missions need not be terminated or even seriously impaired under divine guidance.

The course of both Protestant and Roman Catholic Missions in China makes clear that lack of sympathy or even active opposition on the part of the temporal powers has not proved a deterrent in the past. The early Roman Catholic missionaries suffered persecution and oppression. But they overcame Chinese antipathies not only through the evangelical mission of Christianity itself, but by their good works. This they did through offering the advances in the arts and sciences which Europe at the time could provide. At the beginning of the last century Robert Morrison and his immediate successors were not even permitted to engage native teachers of the language, far less to preach and teach on Chinese soil.

After the conclusion of the first China treaties between China and the western European powers in the early 1840's, missions and missionaries were confined to the five open ports. From 1860 on, the so-called toleration clause, included in the new treaties, became operative. Missionaries were permitted to carry on their work in the interior of China. Chinese under the law could embrace the foreign faith. Still many cases of persecution, obstruction, and even mob violence occurred. This opposition, aggravated by European political encroachments upon China's territories, culminated in the frightful outrages perpetrated upon both foreign missionaries and native converts in the Boxer uprising of 1900.

In late years forces have operated to make the way easy. The Chinese generally have come to perceive the value of Christian missions in accomplishing their own moral and social regeneration. The foreign missionary brought about the revolution in China, political in only one of its phases. In a larger sense it has represented the processes of fundamentally modifying China's traditional social environment. Practically every recent movement for social and moral betterment, it has been declared, can be traced to missionary activity.

In the period of a generation, it has been given us to witness the progressive emergence of China and her people from a virtually medieval social and political status. The process has been slow and painful, but in the main encouraging, even though intrinsic merits of Chinese culture have made it stubbornly resistant to changes. Now has arisen the question in a most acute form: How may the fruits of the past generation's, nay century's, effort be conserved and in what form?

Americans by the very nature of their origins and environment are accustomed to face facts. We must grant, then, that possibly a "New Order" is in course of implementation in the Far East, as in other parts of the world. Whether the ultimate shape of things to come will conform to man-made plans as announced periodically from Tokyo, or will take unexpected forms, remains to be disclosed. The catastrophic course of the war in Europe has deprived the Far Eastern colonial empires of France and the Netherlands of the effective support of the motherlands; and it is not beyond the range of possibility that profound changes will take place in the Asiatic Empire of Great Britain.

The United States government has anticipated eventualities by reaffirming the Monroe Doctrine. Vigorous steps are being taken aiming at the consolidation of America into a hemispheric economic and political *bloc*. Japan characteristically proposes to employ this announced American policy by fusing its Asiatic interpretation with the pattern of Germany in its efforts to create a Nazi-dominated European sphere. American-educated Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka pictures a vast new aggregation of satellite states in East Asia and the South Seas. They are to be stabilized by Japan's superior power, but their individual characteristics, political, cultural, and economic, would be respected, so it is assumed.

Even here Japan makes use of another borrowed concept, for all this

presents a curious revival of ancient Confucianistic political ideology. The early Chinese envisaged a benevolent and somewhat remote hegemon maintaining its sway over a multitude of culturally subordinate surrounding states. The historic Chinese Empire with its virtually autonomous states—Korea, Tongking, Burma, Tibet—and the United States in its self-denying policy toward Cuba and the Philippines, represent in a manner this benevolent political concept. Similarly, as is being done in the sphere of international politics, it is the part of missions to look forward in preparation for a situation that may well have to be met.

If we would endeavor, then, to forecast the fate of American missionary interests in China, under a possible centralized Far Eastern hegemony, we have only to examine the course of missions in Japan itself, and especially in the Korean dependency. In Japan there are still American missionaries and teachers, whose work has been recognized as of the greatest significance in the modern development of the land and its people. The characteristic of Japanese Christianity has been, however, its large measure of independence of foreign control and support. This phenomenon in missions administration has appeared recently in China, in the form of the trend toward an indigenous, self-supported Church, alongside, or even independent of, the missionary societies. In both instances it can be attributed to the development of nationalism.

Protestantism in Japan has been reported as growing, and appears to be a constituent part of the fabric of the nation's life. As to the foreign missionaries themselves, their activities have come to be closely supervised and increasingly circumscribed. From the beginning of its modernization after the middle of the last century, the Japanese government assumed the leadership in general education and in medicine. In Japan missionaries have lately found themselves "inwardly out of sympathy with the fundamental policies of the nation and outwardly restricted from making their full contribution to the life of the people." Thus the missions have been called upon continuously to adjust themselves to a changing environment. This has meant a frank recognition that Japan's national progress has relegated foreign missions, particularly in the field of lay education, to play an admittedly special part.

Foreign and particularly American missionary effort has reached, however, the most critical phase since the suppression of Catholic Christianity at

the beginning of the seventeenth century under the Tokugawa Shoguns. Recently a law has become effective which will have far-reaching effects upon missionary enterprise in Japan. The law, promulgated by the Education Department, requires that Japanese religious bodies be administered by Japanese. The principal issue is that Japanese churches shall be entirely in Japanese hands. This in fact has been the case, as most of the churches have transferred their executive functions to indigenous elements. Back of this movement now, however, stands the army, telling the Japanese people that loyalty to race and nation is the supreme duty and that no foreign religion should be in a position to exercise authority over any Japanese. The Church, too, must cease to receive financial help from abroad as derogatory to national dignity.

The concrete result of these enforced measures to establish an exclusively national Christian Church, has been the resignation of the three English Bishops of the United Anglican Communion in Japan (the Nippon Seikokwai). The three American Bishops are expected to follow suit. The United Methodist mission has relinquished, it is reported, church property worth \$100,000 to the Japanese Methodist Church, while major American, British, and Canadian church properties, valued at millions of dollars, are in process of being turned over to Japanese trusteeship, as a result of the new religious enactment.

Despite the wholesale exodus of Americans generally from the Far East, at the instance of the United States State Department, many missionaries are remaining in Japan and authoritative statements hold out that missionary work by Americans will continue in Japan, with larger financial contributions from the Japanese themselves. Overt action against missions has been taken with the arrest of British and Canadian missionaries in Seoul, while the native personnel of the Salvation Army has been terrorized in Tokyo and Peking.

Korea, or Chosen, to go farther afield, may be regarded as especially illustrative for our purpose of foretelling Japanese policy in newly dominated areas of China. Suppression of Korean nationalism began at the end of the first decade of this century. There followed a sharp clash between the dominant Japanese and the American missionaries sympathetic with Korean aspirations, or unprepared to conform to Japanese secular regulations. Some of these Americans have seen best to leave the country, and they

have thus terminated their usefulness to Korea. Others, by means of a more realistic dialectic, remain to carry on a progressively limited work. Their educational institutions, as in Japan, are now in competition with government school and college, with their more certain resources provided by state revenues, although official allotments for education are proportionately much less in Korea than in Japan itself.

Mission schools, not adapted to the political and social objectives of the Japanese regulated native institutions, have been relegated to a status somewhat like that of our own private schools, sponsored by religious denominations, the theological seminaries, and the like. This goes even farther, for religious instruction must not form a part of the curriculum during the *official* school hours. At least one important mission is carrying forward a program of withdrawal from general education.

The national misfortunes of the Koreans made them the most ready of all Asiatic peoples to embrace the foreign religion whose relationship particularly to powerful America might lead, so they conceived, to an amelioration of their hard lot. Thousands entered the Presbyterian and Methodist congregations; others joined the Y.M.C.A. At one time numbers were attracted by the Salvation Army, the connotation of these words in the Korean-Chinese ideographs suggesting political liberation. The sympathy and spiritual succor extended by American missionaries to this gentle and sensitive people in its national despair can never be estimated.

Regrettably enough, the unconsidered stand taken by certain members of the missions plunged the Koreans into even deeper abysses. On the other hand, the counsel of wise men like the veterans James S. Gale, Horace Underwood and Bishop Herbert Welch, counsels of prudence and adjustment to the lesser evil of the inevitable, saved many from more futile suffering. At length today, while the form and character of the native Christian's deportment toward the Imperial Shrine and the national Shinto rituals have not ceased to be matters of dispute, controversy as old in principle as missions in Asia or Christianity itself, American missionaries continue their supporting role. Now the Korean congregations are displaying a spirit of self-sufficiency which, while conforming to the objective of an independent native Church, adds to the problems of adjustment confronting the missions.

Let it be supposed then that the Japanese succeed in maintaining themselves for a considerable period in certain parts of China where their influ-

ence would be determining. Can prospects similar to those in Japan and Korea be anticipated for American religious and social movements which have bulked so large in the American effort and estimation?

The answer can only be that whatever the measure of alien control over China, it must ultimately be exerted through the Chinese themselves. No effort, political, commercial or cultural, has ever succeeded in China without Chinese co-operation. This is the lesson of history, whether in the days of the Mongol or Manchu dominations, or in the recent era of European *condominium* in China. The task of a completely unilateral rule would be formidable enough, and in the long run impracticable, even for powerful Japan. Complaints have already arisen in Japanese quarters of the growing recalcitrancy of their newly-established native regimes, at Nanking and Shanghai, stigmatized as "puppet" governments, but doubtless as fundamentally irredentist as Chinese nationalism has inevitably proved itself in all ages.

The present juncture may be the starting point for the decline and ultimate collapse of a century and more of European world imperialism. The prestige which the Occidental has enjoyed in East Asia for four centuries may vanish, as Japanese publicists foretell, although such prophecies are uttered with mental reservations when they contemplate the mechanized ferocity with which Europeans still tear each other to pieces. Whether foreign missions will share in the general catastrophe remains to be seen.

The extent to which the Chinese have been thrown back upon their own resources is disclosed in the epic trek of university bodies from the coastal cities to the Far West. Faculty and students have undergone untold privations in this mass withdrawal from the Japanese penetrated areas. They are, however, carrying on in improvised establishments in distant Yunnan, Szechuan and Shensi. While whenever possible they have been aided by their foreign friends, missionary and lay teacher, initiative has passed largely into Chinese hands. Emancipation from foreign supervision in other features of Chinese national life has occurred, as in the administration of the salt revenue, the postal service, railway and highway construction, and the like. The war thus has its far-reaching influence upon Chinese enterprise and self-reliance. Similar effects cannot but be expected in the Christian religious life of the Chinese and especially in the institutional operation of their churches.

In the face of all this, may we hope that the American missionary will maintain his close relationship with the Chinese people, whatever their political status may be. In the long run, it will remain for the Chinese themselves to choose whether they will retain the American spirit by which they have been so thoroughly indoctrinated in the past generation; or whether they will find it inescapable and even desirable to accept a novel ideology, in a China dominated by a semi-mystic "New Order." The answer lies in the statesmanship displayed by those responsible for the conduct of the policies of American missions. It is "what the missionaries have been able to do in the midst of war, in spite of war, and sometimes because of war" that will make missions in China as enduring now and in the future as in the heroic past.

When revisiting China in 1939 I had brought strikingly before me the results of contrasting policies on the part of Christian American leaders. In the one case the American pastor of a metropolitan community church with a large and important Chinese membership had persistently projected himself into the political arena through a series of radio addresses. The Chinese members of his congregation remonstrated with him on grounds that their position was not being helped but actually endangered. The result was that this energetic worker was obliged to withdraw from China where he had enjoyed great usefulness.

In contrast, one of the most experienced American educators in China, the president of a large university of Christian backgrounds, has continued to maintain negotiable relations with the Japanese authorities in occupation. While his private sentiments are well known without any effort at concealment, this able administrator, by a measure of Christian forbearance, has maintained the integrity of his influential institution and has extended the protection of his wisdom and discretion to his native faculty and the student body.

# Christian Faith in Political Philosophy

PAUL F. DOUGLASS

IT IS a unique historical fact that the modern political state has developed in a culture given its peculiar bias by an impulse introduced into Occidental life by Jesus of Nazareth. Since the birth in Bethlehem the Western world has evolved a form of political association which is not only the expression of secular sovereignty but which also exists as a form through which the ideas and energies of men can be released for the guidance and control of themselves. One of the dominant characteristics of this pattern is that *authority has been made amenable to a collective will. Power of human being over human being has been subjugated and made responsible to an educable consensus of opinion.* Man has become a participant in the exercise of power which distributively he shares and which collectively he sustains. For one who is interested in the ancestry of ideas, who seeks to trace pedigrees and who wishes to study the patterns of political association genealogically, it is necessary to ask this question: Just what difference has it made, in patterns of political association, that Jesus lived?

## I

The fact that Jesus was born in Palestine and that His career elementally was rooted in some fifteen centuries of Hebrew tradition is of primary significance to Occidental life. The situs of Christianity's origin was and is marginal to the cultures of both East and West. As long as Christian faith has its citadel in Palestine, as long as the experience of Israel is basic to religious expression, so long national life must be judged by something beyond and outside itself. Racial idolatry and national nepotism can never assimilate the dominant faith of the Western world as long as each year brings its heart to the manger in Bethlehem.

This peripheral strategy of the Hebrew tradition is all the more significant because military power was never a vital attribute of Hebrew culture. The Israelites were at the mercy of every great political and imperialistic movement sustained by armed force. Enslaved, dispersed, their unity

was preserved by a tradition which was independent of all the secular powers of earth which Herod represented. This politically unimportant people was the people of a *Book*, unquestionably the most influential literary work to make an impact on Occidental culture. Yet the origin of this *Book* in time and space lay outside the Occidental cultural world.

The influence of the Hebrew tradition and the impact of the memory of Jesus were so pervasive and compelling that the *Western world* was identified as the *Christian world*. In common parlance the two descriptive adjectives came to be interchangeable. Important it is that the Christian fellowship is rooted in this Hebrew tradition. Latourette correctly says that "it was because of what Jesus did to His intimates and because of their belief in Him and in His death, resurrection and early return that Christianity set out upon its career of conquest. It was because, for some reason, these experiences and convictions and faith possessed the inner dynamic which continued to give it driving power. Here was a vast release of creative energy that revolutionized the lives which opened themselves to it. Other factors entered into the outcome, but in this was chiefly the secret of the unprecedented growth of the Christian movement."<sup>1</sup>

The impulse of Christianity comes upon the Occidental world forever as something just outside its own range of historic tradition. It is this peripheral strategy of the Hebrew tradition, this external situs of the foundations of Occidental faith that gave and continues to give an enduring vigor to the Christian fellowship as a social phenomenon wholly independent of political society.

## II

The result of the widening circle of individuals aware of the presence in life of the Risen Lord produced a society independent in origin of the political community and dependent neither upon geographic soil nor secular sword for its existence. The consequence of this genetical independence of the Christian fellowship was the disentanglement of political society from sacerdotalism. As long as political power was identified with religion and the union was symbolized in the reign of a potentate, the conditions for the development of a positive politics did not exist. But when the Church as a fellowship of Christians came to coexist with the State, a situation new in history appeared. The separation of Church and State, the relation of Pope

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Expansion of Christianity: The First Five Centuries*. Volume I, p. 170.

and Emperor proved to be different from anything that Greece and Rome had ever known. To a Greek or a Roman there never was a Church as distinguished from a State, nor a State as distinguished from a Church. Church and State were one. Because the Christian fellowship was a genetically independent group, nothing exactly like it had existed before in political experience. This situation had its very practical collateral consequences.

The first was a practical limitation on political power which placed *conscience* above the law. The Christian, looking to his conscience as an ultimate umpire, found certainty in a certain inwardness of choice and decision which even triumphed over physical life itself. It was the disconcerting effect of Christianity that it made disobedience to the law under certain circumstances a moral duty. "We ought to obey God rather than men." The Christian felt himself perfectly justified in disobedience of law and authority when the authority conflicted with his Christian loyalties. To the Christian there was and is always something above the law. This was true even in canon law, where even an unreasonable or unjust sentence of excommunication had no final validity. That an unjust sentence has no effect before God was a principle laid down in the eleventh century by Cardinal Deusdedit, one of the most important and determined supporters of the extreme papal position. Innocent III laid it down explicitly that while the judgment of God is always true, the judgment of the Church may be erroneous. Hence a man may be condemned by God who is held guiltless by the Church and be condemned by the Church who is guiltless before God.

The establishment of this principle of Christian community, that under certain circumstances the conscience is above and judges the law, was given an augmented significance by the emergence of the individual as something having a spiritual life independent of group solidarity. In primitive society the individual and the individual personality counted for little or nothing. The social unit was the group, the clan, the tribe. As far as Occidental culture is concerned, the idea of the emergence of the individual as a personality belongs to the period between Aristotle and the Christian era. Carlyle calls this transformation which was taking place in the attitude of the Western world toward the individual in the centuries immediately preceding the coming of Jesus "the most remarkable change in the conception of life which we know of in the historical period of human life. After all,

it is true to say that the whole character of the life of the modern world is built upon the conviction that the individual man is in the end in some real sense morally responsible for himself."

The emergence of the individual, which heretofore had been delayed by the folkways of group religion embodied in political life, was accelerated by a power of inner conviction which spread with the expansion of the Christian community. When Peter and John had been warned not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus, they answered: "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4. 19-20). Thus from the first, in a singularly clear and marked fashion, Christianity maintained the principle of the responsibility of the individual to his own conscience and to his own God. And this was what distinguished the early Christian fellowship from the dissolving society which cherished the folkway of group accountability. Of course, Christians did not for the first time bring this conception into the world. What Christianity did was to create an emotional conviction which made individual responsibility an inevitable consequence of faith. "A man's ultimate relations are solely to God; and perhaps the deepest thing in Christianity is the adequacy with which it presents this ultimate solitude of the soul, not alone in birth, or in death, but in the history of its own ethical problem, which no one can meet for it. This is the essential freedom of the self, that it stands for a fateful moment outside of all belongings, and determines for itself alone whether its primary attachments shall be with actual earthly interests or with those of an ideal and potential Kingdom of God."<sup>2</sup> These are the words so eloquently spoken by Professor Hocking. The preaching of the gospel of salvation powerfully promotes the individuation of men and dissolves them from the group into individual souls and selves, morally accountable to God for sin and individually dependent upon His grace for their salvation.

### III

And yet even with the process of the disentanglement of political society from sacerdotalism in operation and even with the emergent individual in process of being extricated from group solidarity, a positive science of politics could not appear in the Western world until four elemental

<sup>2</sup> *The Lasting Elements of Individualism*, pp. 22-23.

attitudes had developed and interacted in such a way as to make available the mental and emotional tools for the development of the modern state. Until men were able to think and feel and act in terms of these patterns, the conditions precedent to orderly human government did not exist. These elemental attitudes were (1) scientific interest; (2) the idea of progress; (3) humanitarianism; and (4) universal education. In other words, mankind needed a positive methodology, a hope, a concern for human welfare, and a respect for the mind of every man to the extent that he is prepared for participation in the power which distributively he shares and collectively he sustains.

It is a singular historical fact that the world which produced the attitude of scientific interest was also the world so influenced by Christianity that it was identified by the adjective "Christian." The historical uniqueness of the scientific attitude in the Christian culture circle raises the question as to what peculiar influence Christianity had upon the development. Why did scientific interest appear only in the area which Christianity dominated?

#### SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

Fundamentally, scientific interest is an attitude of *expectation* to discover logically necessary connections with material things. Richard Hocking, in explaining the relation between Christianity and scientific interest before the American Philosophical Association in 1938, said: "Scientific interest is the compact product of a long history. The *disinterestedness* of the scientist is not understood, not even by the scientist himself, unless it is seen in the context of the monastic detachment from the world of private wants, and in the context of the Roman sense of public utility as an obligation. The passion of the scientist directed toward the impersonal world of material things is not understood unless it is seen in the context of the Christian belief in the goodness of nature, and of the Jewish contribution thereto. The rationality of the scientist, his insistence upon the predictability, and on deductive unity of theory, is not understood unless seen in the context of Greek rationality and of the Christian direction of it toward the material world."

The cultures of Judea, Greece, and Rome were joined in the period of the Renaissance to give us a fusion known as scientific interest. As they passed into the tradition of Christianity, the contribution of each culture

was fused into this attitude of scientific interest. How? The Christian was convinced that physical things in themselves are lovable, reliable, and approachable. Roman practical common sense was supported by an impractical optimism which is specifically Christian. To this fusion of Christian and Roman ways of looking at things, the monks added a divine sanction to the dignity of work, to the laborious handling of nature. This specifically Christian emphasis had a direct importance to modern science which is experimental and infinitely laborious. It was not until the time of the Schoolmen, however, that the fusion of the Greek, Jewish and Roman elements necessary for the development of scientific interest created a definitive pattern of thought and life. Not until then did the Christian add to its moral humility and its utilitarian attitude toward nature the rational obligation to think nature systematically. The recovery of the complete Aristotelian encyclopedia along with much of the Platonic was a revelation to the Schoolmen of the meaning of free intellectual curiosity. Now this curiosity, appropriated by a new kind of mentality, probed nature more deeply than Greek curiosity was able to do because it was a curiosity backed by the Jewish-Christian optimism about material nature and the Roman-Christian obligation to work with nature. The scholastic controversy about universals was actually the attempt to reconcile the Greek intellectual snobishness of science with the existing mind of Christendom. The mathematics which the Greeks had kept aloof from material existence was reborn under a new metaphysical creed that removed the obstacles to its application to all physical events. Then scientific interest appeared in the world for the first time.

Once the pattern of thought known as scientific interest was achieved, the rapid growth of the modern exact sciences was certain. The circular process of scientific induction, once begun, grew wider and wider. Discovery led to prediction, and prediction to invention, and invention to more discovery. The experimental method became both a systematic discipline and a new way of life. Science became a tool for the control and appropriation and understanding of nature by man. It established one of the necessary intellectual and moral and technical attitudes of a positive politics. Scientific interest became an attitude and science a method by which the thoughts and habits of the Occident and later the whole earth were profoundly disturbed.

## THE IDEA OF PROGRESS

The dynamic element in this new technology gave it a significance for the idea of progress. The ancient theory that mankind revolves in a vicious circle is destroyed by patent facts. The medieval notion of a static society bound to a rule-of-thumb routine is swept into the discard by events. A tool was in the hands of man, who alone asks a fundamentally impertinent question: Why, for what purpose this brief and precarious existence in a universe that endures? What is man's relation to this universe that is sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile, but in the end is always fatal to him? The Christian was ready with an answer to these inquiries about ultimate things.

An instinctive pessimism runs through the Greek tradition. Mankind was caught in a dismal treadmill. The Christian, on the other hand, recognized the history of the earth as a unique phenomenon in time. This was important in extricating man's thought from the ebb and flow of cyclic destiny. Christian theology was constructing a synthesis which for the first time attempted to give a definite meaning to the whole course of human events. The substance of this synthesis was the representation that the past is leading up to a desirable goal in the future. Under the propulsion of the Christian myth, the idea of progress took form. In time it came to have a philosophical status of its own, but its origin was inextricably bound up with the impulse of Christianity upon the Western world. The conviction that man was going somewhere and getting somewhere became a tenet of popular belief. Without such a hope, no democratic society could long exist.

## HUMANITARIANISM

Coupled with this attitude of scientific interest and the idea of progress came the attitude of humanitarianism, a sentiment of concern for the welfare of other human beings because they are human beings. In a limited sense this virtue existed before the birth of Jesus. What Christianity did was to make the obligation of concern for the welfare of other human beings binding on the Christian conscience. And this sentiment of humanitarianism was the product of two distinct currents of Christian conviction. The first was the enhanced regard for the individual which was produced in the Christian brotherhood. Every creature was a personality with a living soul possessed of an immortal destiny. Had not Jesus said: "Are not five spar-

rows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?" Christianity gave to men an example and an exhortation and an obligation to concern for the welfare of other human beings because they were human beings for whom God cared. It was this sentiment which softened and elevated the life of the Western world and lifted it to conceptions of benevolence which had not and have not been developed to a similar degree in other epochs or in other culture areas. The Christian impulse to *fraternal compassion* introduced into the stream of history of the Western world an element which was necessary to make possible the conditions under which a positive politics could develop.

#### UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

The pattern of scientific interest, of the idea of progress, and of the sentiment of humanitarianism established a kind of attitudinal framework of the emergent society, which needed now to be supplemented by universal education. Universal education was not possible until the conviction was general that there was something which every man ought to know, had to know for his own good because the knowledge concerned the eternal destiny of his soul. Universal education was not possible until this conviction became a tenet of faith of society—that a man had something which he must learn to function as a part of the culture in which he lives. It was the specific missionary enthusiasm of the Church which spread a uniformity of information and habit among the converts as a condition of understanding the mass and tradition and life of the Church which gave momentum to this movement. The history of education is influenced by many streams but chief among them is the Church's instruction of the convert in the symbols of faith and worship, which created a common universe of discourse essential to the maintenance of the unity of the spiritual society. The Protestant theory added another push to the educational development. The practical logic of the Protestant position was this: For the welfare of his own soul, a man must know the Scriptures himself. He must therefore read them himself in the vernacular which he understands.

#### IV

It is impossible to analyze the evolution of the pattern of positive political association without turning to what was taking place in England. Chris-

tianity made the Anglo-Saxon people a nation and brought them into the orbit of the civilized world. The assimilation of the Anglo-Saxons into the Christian world had an importance which was not entirely domestic. For the first time their laws and institutions began to affect the laws and institutions existing on the continent of Europe. The political institutions of England after the Norman conquest were unique in two particulars. The first of these distinguishing characteristics was the omnipotence or undisputed sovereignty of the central government throughout the whole country. The second was the rule or supremacy of law. Until this conception of the rule of law was defined and put into actual practice, it was impossible to have political association in which authority was responsible and amenable to the collective will. This rule of law was a complex of three distinct ideas: (1) no man is punishable or can be lawfully made to suffer in body or goods except for a distinct breach of law established in the ordinary legal manner before the ordinary courts of the land; (2) no man is above the law and every man is subject to the ordinary law of the realm and amenable to the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunals; (3) the application of the general principles of the constitution is the result of the judicial decision determining the rights of private persons in particular cases brought before the court.

This conception of the rule of law, caught in the maelstrom of controversy which in the beginning was an ecclesiastical and economic issue, was basic in a philosophical statement of positive political theory by John Milton, which in itself was the culmination of a tempestuous experience in England. The Puritan movement was politically important because it was the channel through which the theories of secular and ecclesiastical politics that had been elaborated on the Continent during the Renaissance and Reformation were introduced into English life. In the process political concepts began to be clarified by friction. Indeed, the multitudinous manifestoes, setting forth certain inalienable rights of man, began to give a basis for constitutional guarantees of liberty in a written constitution conceived of as a fundamental document. John Milton, ardent Protestant and Christian, was a man of genius in the center of the storm. The philosophic political position, to which he was largely driven by practical politics, gave systematic form to a kind of political system basic to man's freedom. The substance of his doctrine was this: that all men are naturally born free; that they are endowed with the right and power of self-defense and preservation; that to avoid

the discord and violence that sprang from Adam's transgression, commonwealths are founded by agreement with one another; that kings and magistrates are chosen as deputies and commissioners to execute that justice which every man otherwise by the bond of nature and of covenant must have executed for himself and for one another; that to guard against the perverse tendencies of the persons thus intrusted with authority, laws were devised to limit the action of the governors; that kings and magistrates are thus agents of the people; that as such they possess no power save what is originally in every man and is delegated to them; that power remains fundamentally in the people as their natural birthright; that the only doctrine which is compatible with the dignity of man is that the people can depose their rulers for violation of right and law; that it is by God that people assert their liberties; that ultimate political power is in the people; that reason is but choosing; and that where the opportunity to choose is denied by the prescription of government, manhood itself is stunted and destroyed; that rational liberty must include religious toleration and the unrestricted freedom of the press; that government must keep its hands entirely off the regulation of intercourse and communion between God and man; and that government must aim at giving every man the opportunity of working out his own good. Positive politics up to that time had been given no clearer statement.

## V

The centuries which passed between the birth of Christ and the adoption of the Constitution of the United States were given a substance by the experience of fifty-four generations of men. The dominant impulse during all these years was given to the society of the Western world by the fact that Jesus of Nazareth had once lived and died and empowered a society by an intrinsic authority.

The development of America opened up a haven of refuge to men of conviction. Ideas, like men, crossed the ocean. A new continental political culture began to take shape just at the time that the attitudes and tools of a positive politics were available and had been forged in the heats of old continental controversy. American political culture began to develop while John Locke was trying to explain how William and Mary could be crowned by a Republican England. In the process of his dialectics, he set forth the conception of social contract with a definiteness which was necessary for the

complete dispersion of political mysticism. America was able to forge the attitudes and tools of political experience into a constitutional framework which provided that basic immunity for the mobilization of opinion, which is so essential if government is to be amenable to an educable consensus of opinion and if security is to be guaranteed under law.

In America, fortunate to be late enough in development to be heir to the experience of Europe, a pattern of political association evolved in which the individual shared in political power which collectively he sustained within a realm of immunity for the mobilization of opinion which makes government amenable to an educable consensus of opinion.

If one is not interested in the ancestry of ideas, one is apt to forget that this dynamic pattern of political association has been produced alone in the Occidental world, which is known as Christian. Even in this Western world the reconciliation of government with liberty is being attacked and undermined by the invasion of the realms of immunity from which an educable consensus of opinion develops and in which human beings are free from the arbitrary caprice of government. Men become then servile and silent subjects. It is not strange that this invasion of personality is more serious in those few countries in which Christian faith and organization have been displaced by a renaissance of political and dialectic mysticism.

It is not proper for a historian of the ancestry of ideas to be either a preacher or a prophet; but this must be said: May not a condition of the preservation of the pattern of positive political association be that support for and renewal of the soul which comes from the association with that man of Galilee, in whom the law and the prophets are fulfilled?

# The Non-Pacifist Christian

DOUGLAS STRATON

**T**HERE are three general types of Christian attitude which may be adopted toward war. The first is pacifism. The second is that war sometimes is just and holy and may be participated in by Christians. And the third says that war, though generally bad, is sometimes thrust upon us and must be endured as a necessary evil.

Since the fiasco of the last great crusade of 1914-18, Christians have pretty generally discarded the notion that war is ever positively holy. Therefore the two alternatives, pacifism on the one hand or the necessary war on the other, remain, between which the individuals of the Christian community must choose. This article supports the view that war is a necessary evil, given the stage of history at which we now are.

To the author pacifism seems to make a narrow definition of Christianity. It seems to ignore patent Christian values in the institutional areas of human life for the sake of increasing them in provinces where individual factors are largely concerned. Pacifism decides that Christianity is primarily a matter of personal religion which concerns the adjustment that the individual soul must make to his God. Accepting this view, pacifism concludes that the Christian must not resort to a policy of force, because a willingness to use force involves an unethical attitude which compromises the perfection of Christian character.

Now incentives to the highest character, they say, are most deeply rooted in the eternal world itself, in the will of God. It is the responsibility to a kind of "natural law" which pacifism professes, to the basic law of human nature planted in the eternal order. Pacifism tries to lay bare the divine norm beyond the mere wishes of the individual. It sincerely endeavors to contact "the deep-seated, exacting order of reality—half-natural, half-moral in its manifestations—to which human behavior finds itself again and again constrained to readjust its ways."<sup>1</sup> And in so doing the pacifist attitude claims to have a genuinely social outlook.

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<sup>1</sup> R. L. Calhoun and R. H. Bainton: *Christian Conscience and the State*, Social Action pamphlet of the Congregational Church, Oct. 15, 1940, p. 36.

But it presumes that these universal requirements founded in the nature of man, which test personal wishes and social habits alike, *may best be discovered by individual quest*. Hence the tendency is inescapable, namely, to place a premium on personal purity, and to forget that there may be values worth saving at any cost in other vital areas of human experience, that is to say, those respecting political institutions and social structure, which themselves may conceivably derive from the natural order and which certainly work to uphold the dignity and contribute to the happiness of the individual himself by defining his social relationships.

Surely much practical pacifism, such as that exhibited by the Quakers, is far from escapist. Yet given the principle, the pressure toward personal isolation is strong. So reluctant is thorough-going pacifism to admit the ultimate or long range worth of institutions when in contrast to immediate personal values that it manifests a willingness to submit to any indignity, even to a world tyranny, if necessary, in preference to taking the life of another human being in national defense. The point they stress is that two personal values are attacked; not only the life of the one soldier, which is entirely destroyed, but the natural disposition of his opponent to live at peace and in affection with all men is permanently injured, being displaced by an element of hate and hardness that warps the soul. Therefore the pacifist would suggest that the two men refuse to fight, and that the issue be solved on this simple personal level. Finally, they ground their pacifistic view in religion as being primarily that force in human life which conditions the behavior of men by influencing their motives.

But the pacifist analysis oversimplifies a state of affairs which is in fact terribly complex and needs to be straightened out in an institutional way as well as by personal, moral determination. They do not see that "what is important is not that men should refuse to fight, but that the situation should not arise in which they are asked to fight."<sup>2</sup> They do not clearly understand that a good institutional environment may also condition the motives of men, and may therefore conceivably be just as much a part of God's plan as are the strong values of personal faith. It is not that wars are caused primarily by the personal hate of one man for another, but rather, wars are caused by conflict between impersonal social forces and the struggle of national sovereignties one with the other for mastery of the economic field. The

<sup>2</sup> W. B. Curry: *The Case for Federal Union*, Penguin Books, p. 40.

great balance of the world's troubles today is in a bad institutional establishment, especially in the international political realm, and presumably solution will come nearer when we commence to build a better institutional structure.

In this tendency of pacifism to discredit the importance of institutions there may be discerned a type of martyr complex, perhaps perfectly sincere, yet a tacit assumption that Christianity doubtless needs the tribulation of an actual world despotism to challenge and awaken the deepest energies and resistances of the Christian consciousness before Christ's program can succeed among individuals in the world.

Before we discuss the weakness of this attitude it must be acknowledged that it does have much value. It is the type of insight that puts individual personality absolutely over against the traditional, organized power of the group. It proclaims that the transient values of government are not worth upholding against absolute and eternal personal responsibilities. Asserting this position, pacifists are indeed a leaven in society and ought to be respected for their keen sense of the difference in these values. Their feeling arises from a just fear of state power, and from a genuine doubt of the efficacy of mere *government* in the long run. The meek and the poor in spirit have justly complained down through the ages of the depredations of irresponsible political power in the hands of the privileged, the proud, or the unprincipled. The voice of conscientious objectors sincerely speaks in the age-old defense of human freedom against the presumptions of state power. Their opposition to draft laws and the like rather poignantly indicates the great issues at stake today as human freedom confronts a world of rampant dictatorship and a governmental power which is everywhere distended. The very essence of democracy, they feel, implies the absolute guaranty of the rights of the individual in matters of conscience. The State, they believe, was made for man and not man for the State, and when the latter encroaches upon the domain of conscience, then the natural right of free men to resist begins. Indeed there are the two poles; on the one hand dictatorship and tyranny, where the State institution is exalted to the exclusion of all individual rights, and on the other anarchy and individual irresponsibility. Between them lie the more reasonable restraints of democratically instituted states. But who is to decide and what is to determine save the inviolate conscience of the individual when in his honest judgment those restraints mount up so high as to justify a policy of opposition or revolt on his part? It is already a commonplace to say that the history of our era is one of

mounting governmental restraints; and consequently it may be predicted, in the case of Europe at least, that it is eventually to be one of uncompromising resistance by the forces of freedom. Moreover, let us not be too sure that the question is merely an academic one for our free America—a land where the issue of a third term for a president has for the first time actually been a major point of controversy in a political campaign. Rethinking the problem of the State and its power is man's primary responsibility today, and pacifists are contributing to this task and ought to be duly respected in their frank opinions—no matter how strongly we may differ with them on the practical question.

But if the pacifists lay stress upon the personal and individual values of the Christian concept, there is another school which also discerns the institutional values of the Christian concept. If, contrary to pacifism, you decide that Christianity in the course of its development during the past two thousand years has come to imply something broader than merely one's own isolated piety; that it also comprehends *social relationships*, which ultimately have their foundations in political structure; then you may say that the basic Christian values inherent in the democratic State—the opportunity for men to stand equal before one another as individually they do before God—must be preserved, and by forceful resistance if necessary, against threat of their overthrow. Else the very primary conditions for an ultimately Christian society—namely, the democratic institutions which Western civilization has struggled for a thousand years to build up—may be destroyed for a long time and the plan of God Himself in history be turned aside for many generations. To this type of Christian attitude, which not only accepts the necessity for upstanding personal character, but in addition recognizes the reality and facts of political existence in the present world and duly acknowledges government's great contribution to God's processes in human life, pacifism, with its reference to the ego and to irresponsibility, is not a realistic and adequate answer to the problems of the world.

A conscientious Christian with this kind of outlook can declare: "I am willing and ready to defend the innocent and helpless from ravage by brutality and aggression, and to protect the patent institutional life of the commonwealth where innocence and helplessness are guaranteed an equal hearing. By defending my country and its political forms—its law courts, its legislative assemblies, its universal franchise—I defend some of the most

precious values that I know, values that can be permanently destroyed by aggression in the course of international conflict. Therefore I conceive it my duty to preserve from possible annihilation the divine principles of justice and equality that I see approximated concretely in the parliamentary institutions of American or British or any other democracy. If indeed in this tragic world—where brutal power stalks apace, unreasoning, irresponsible, and often charged by a demonic purpose to destroy—we can see no other way than to counter brute force by force, and if this defense be called sin, then frankly—God having mercy on our souls—we are forced to sin in such a world.” And here may we be reminded of the strange truth in the Hebrew idea of a guilty race, of a sin-conditioned and corrupt world from which none of us escapes.

In sum then, as Christians we do have a civic duty to perform, which is sometimes a grievous duty. And this is not placing the sovereignty of government above the sovereignty of Christian conscience. For we would simply defend those political forms, given in the democratically constituted State, which in our honest judgment provide in the long run the only sure means whereby men may really co-operate and have the chance fully to exhibit their Christian character. Unmistakably there are the social conditions of salvation. It is reasonable to interpret civil government as one of these.

Finally, it is not true and the disposition is weak which is inclined to believe that the condition of a world-wide tyranny is necessary before Christianity by reaction can establish itself on a universal scale in the hearts of men. Presumably the race has progressed beyond the time when such a situation, as conceivably under the Roman Empire, played into the hands of the movement that Christ began. It is not wrong to believe that in our modern age the social implications inherent in the Christian faith have actually begun to flower in such good democratic institutions as we now have in wide areas of the world—granting all the imperfections and the much room for improvement. These we ought to hold dear and be willing to preserve from willful and unnecessary destruction. In light of the patent advance of our institutional structure in the democratic West over everything that former ages had, to go back to conditions like those of the Roman Empire under a modern Caesar would be a hopeless, a tragic retrogression, indeed a failure that in itself would cast wide doubt upon the effectiveness of Christianity as a world-regenerating and saving principle. Unwillingness to uphold the

values political democracy has achieved during the past centuries by submission to totalitarian aggression—which is capitulation to tyranny—harks back to the time when apocalyptic visionaries and fanatics foolishly sought martyrdom for the sheer effect of its stimulation of the ego.

More accurately speaking, however, the analogy of modern totalitarianism and ancient Rome is false. Never did the Caesars have such technical means of suppression at their disposal as have the present-day Hitlers, the opportunity to dominate all opposition in the areas which they control, utterly to destroy, if they desire, values which we hold precious, and Christianity among them. Herman Rauschnig, one of our keenest interpreters of the present German revolution, frankly acknowledges this fact. In referring to the Nazi ambition for absolute power and dominion, he says: "Thus at the back of Germany's continental empire stands the will to absolute dominion in the world, *the technical means of which are no longer lacking as hitherto*" (Italics mine).<sup>8</sup>

If persecution in the Roman Empire was severe at times, it may be answered that organized persecution occurred only infrequently, considering the long period of history during which Christianity was growing in strength before imperial recognition, and the long intervals of toleration it actually enjoyed between the sporadic suppressions by the stronger emperors. Generally speaking, the Empire was greatly tolerant of minority religious groups and saw in them no important threat to imperial theory or policy. Its persecution of Christianity grew out of a misunderstanding of the latter, until finally it was actually acknowledged in Constantine's recognition that the new religion was not by intent opposed to imperial policy or the latter irreconcilable with Christianity. Whereas today it is the open and avowed declaration of the Nazis, given their theories of racial domination backed by its anti-moral, illiberal, war-inspired fanaticism, that they will brook no opposition from and allow no toleration toward such a patently contrary philosophy as is in Christianity.

If the Roman emperors—to keep together their moribund State, for which increasingly with every generation real enthusiasm was dying—had only the threat of the lions to hold over the heads of the Christians in order to force them to recant and into line with what was considered the best imperial policy, the present-day Caesars have behind them already the en-

<sup>8</sup> From *The Revolution of Nihilism* as quoted by Harry Scherman in "What is this War About?", Saturday Review of Lit., vol. XXI, No. 4. (1939, November).

thusiasm of young, fanatical millions, who are seeking emotional release from the disillusion of an age. The Caesars today can wield and are wielding all the appeals of advertisement propaganda and the technical means of force for winning or coercing universal assent to the totalitarian way. If it were the tendency then to step out of line with the brutality and crassness of the Roman way of life and into the milder existence encouraged by Christianity, it is just as clearly the general tendency today on the part of the masses to leave the softer experiences of bourgeois, Christian society, with its much secular vacuity and commonplaceness and disillusion, for the more exhilarating escapes of totalitarian war-dynamism, the appeals and sanctions of which lie deep in primitive, heroic instincts. This is the historic soil which Nazi propaganda has been so successful in fertilizing and sowing for its own wicked harvests. But the situation was precisely opposite in the declining days of the Roman Empire, when Christianity won its appeal.

If pacifists are inclined to feel that Hitler has not been as severe with the Christians as were some of the Roman emperors, they may be reminded that though Hitler has as yet not actually thrown people to the lions, his methods are none-the-less sinister and effective. And if the pacifist persists in his position by appealing to his pacifist faith as that which will eventually overcome the world, no matter what the obstacle, by saying, "As a Christian I shall exercise my Christian attitude of mercy and forgiveness and non-violence and so make my cause effective in this world," he may be reminded that in a totalitarian world he would not even be able to do this. If he were to try to exercise his Christianity in any positive or effective manner in such a world, he would be thrown into a concentration camp and be fed mind-destroying chemicals that would rob him even of the power to assert his Christian character, that would take away his natural prerogatives of reason and freedom and leave him a most pitiful and ineffective animal—save for what doubtful influence his example of innocent suffering might have upon his half-crazed prison companions or upon his brutal and neurotic guards.

Moreover, it is well to recall that in spite of the actual authoritarianism and much brutality of the later Roman Empire, that ancient State was in large part a pretty decent institution, which kept order and exercised justice through wide areas and over long periods of time, and that it did this in the name of reason embodied in its civil statutes, and ultimately in the name of natural law. The philosophers of the Roman State, Cicero, Seneca, and

the Stoics; its lawgivers, Ulpian, Justinian and the rest; its priests and religious leaders, Augustine and the Christian fathers, all agreed that the State was a divine institution, a matter of the *ius naturale*, ordained of God to repress anarchy and visit justice upon the sins of disorder. This was a noble conception of the State, and it was a theoretical sanction that could arise only about an institution which was in fact performing a great service to the ancient world. The New Testament writers themselves particularly emphasized what they implied was the divine function of the State, and it was only the Roman State that they had as an example (Romans 13. 1-7; I Peter 2. 13-17). Furthermore, during the long periods between the persecutions the Christian communities lived at peace with their pagan rulers and actually took part in the administration of public affairs. It was only upon the sporadic occasions of the persecutions themselves that in the eyes of the Christians the State was becoming a totalitarian and demonic force interpreted as the ravages of the beast in the apocalyptic literature.

On the whole, the theory of the Roman State and much of its practical administration was a far cry from modern totalitarian ideas and methods. If in the Roman State law was respected and given divine sanction, and indeed became the parent of all continental law for two thousand years, it is in modern Germany that these venerable legal institutions are being trampled upon by the Nazi boot and utterly disdained by their pseudo-intellectuals, seeking to justify their party's depredations—arrest, imprisonment, and execution without hearing and without trial. If Roman jurists had a responsible appreciation of the dignity of man and the ultimate sanction of the people as source of the imperial authority, Hitler utterly belittles human capacity and has succeeded in impressing his own people and those whom he has conquered into moral and physical slavery. If the Roman rulers had a respect for universal *reason* as the final sanction and source of human political institutions, Hitler and his crowd utterly deprecate *reason* as a qualified norm for human conduct. If the Roman State could accept within its broad sovereignty and protection all peoples and nations of the Mediterranean world and give equal rights to the Jew, the Egyptian, and the Greek along with the Roman, Nazi-Fascism exalts the ruling race and impresses the other peoples under its sovereignty and for whom it is responsible into the most abject moral and physical servitude. Totalitarianism is completely subversive of all decent political values.

Indeed, the beginnings of good political institutions commenced with the Roman reverence for law and universal human reason as its divine sanction. And the growth of these institutions has progressed from age to age, giving each successive generation in the West a greater measure of justice and freedom and opportunity for genuine fellowship. This development has flowered in our day in concrete republican democracy. Such a blessing have these parliamentary rights and privileges become in the experience of the West for the past two or three centuries, that we would count it a great loss, an irreparable damage, to see them go down under the cynical threat and demonic aggression of Fascism.

The thesis here set forth is that an increase of individual values must accompany an increase in *institutional values*, if mankind is to make any permanent progress; and that sometimes we shall have to be willing to forfeit an immediate gain in personal values—as a policy of force would acknowledge—in order to protect long-range institutional values which will permanently increase the opportunity of men to stand equal before themselves and thus to contribute to greater personal value itself. Christianity is something more than man's relationship to God; it is more than that—it concerns men's relationship to each other, and this presupposes political structure and its maintenance.

It is the author's opinion that institutions themselves constitute the final conditions for the success of the Christian hope of world brotherhood, and that civil government is itself a factor in God's redemptive process.

It is entirely conceivable that something like Clarence Streit's plan for Federal Union will have been established by the end of the century, when Hitlerism has worn itself out. That kind of international order would be worth defending with every ounce of red blood flowing in the veins of true patriots. By all means let us bravely preserve such advance as we have already made by two thousand years of sweat and toil toward this goal.

# What Is Dialectic?

JOHN WRIGHT BUCKHAM

FOR some time past the thought world has been becoming increasingly dialectic-conscious. The term appears repeatedly in philosophy, in theology, and in literature—often to the consternation of the reader; for it has a somewhat forbidding aspect.

## DIALECTIC DEFINED

It may perhaps mitigate the bewilderment and nostalgia produced in the minds of many people by this cryptic word, to be assured that—like Jourdain in Moliere's famous play, who was astonished to learn that he had been speaking prose all his life without knowing it—they have been using, or perchance abusing, dialectic all their lives without being aware of it. What, then, is dialectic? The dictionaries define it too indefinitely as the reasoning process in general. More specifically it may be defined as follows: *Dialectic consists in the analysis of experience in order to bring out its constituent elements, followed by the adjustment of these to one another according to their inherent relations and values.*

Before such a task as this the nonprofessional philosopher is likely to put in a disclaimer, declaring: But I am not engaged in the process of analyzing experience and adjusting its constituent elements to one another according to their relations and values; that is the business of the philosopher and logician, not mine. True, it is the especial task of the philosopher, but not his alone. For every man is compelled to be a philosopher, since he is obliged, by virtue of his having, or being, a mind, to analyze his experience and relate and evaluate it. Life demands the constant practice of dialectic in order to meet its confronting exigencies.

In this process we may detect two contrasted forms of dialectic:

(1) *Decisional dialectic*, by which *contraries* are detected and clarified, so that the will may adopt the one and reject the other; that is, the "*either-or*," or disjunctive form.

(2) *Synthetic dialectic*, by which polar *contrapletes* are cognized and brought into synthetic relationship; that is, the "*both-and*," conjunctive form.

## DECISIONAL DIALECTIC

It is very misleading when the term *dialectic* is applied exclusively to the *either-or*, or decisional, form of dialectic, ignoring the synthetic *both-and* form, with which the word is chiefly associated.

This is peculiarly the fault of the Barthian school of theology. The Barthian dialectic is virtually confined to *decisional* dialectic. Its watchwords are "Either-Or," "Yes-No."

There is a vital need, to be sure, for examination into the issues of truth and life in which real *contraries* are lodged, sometimes imperceptibly. Between genuine contraries, choice of one and rejection of the other is imperative. Barth has been alert in recognizing this. He found himself in a world situation which he well defined as one of *crisis*—a time for decision between irreconcilable opposites, moral and religious.

The choice lay between allegiance to Christianity, or paganism; loyalty to the Church, or to Nazism. Here was no possible synthesis, but a call for decision. And Barth met it with the courageous word, "I say No."

The crisis today is greater, however, than Barthianism recognizes. It is a time when the dialectic of decision needs especial emphasis. Vital issues are demanding clear and decisive choices: Moral Integrity versus Moral Laxity; Faith versus Defeatism; Democracy versus Fascism; Peace versus War; Truth versus the Lie. There is no truce, or compromise, between such contraries. Good and Evil grow "together" but never into one another. A "Heaven and Hell Amalgamation Society" is as much an anachronism now as it has ever been—however plausibly presented.

Yet decisional dialectic is only the lesser and negative form of dialectic. The positive and constructive form is:

## SYNTHETIC DIALECTIC

Dialectic, as a means of attaining truth and directing life, requires, as the first essential of its existence, to get both sides of the matter at issue, whatever it may be, clearly and fully before the mind—be it the individual mind, or the group mind. Unless this is done dialectic fails, at the first step. For everything depends upon an all-around conspectus—seeing, not only life itself but, as far as possible, its every event and issue "steadily and seeing it whole." If in any instance one side or the other is overlooked, or concealed, or suppressed, in order to secure a desired end rather than a right

and just one, the mind has wronged itself, and others, and there can be no true dialectic. This principle is rightly insisted upon by science, by ethics, and by philosophy, whose very spirit is that of wholeness and impartiality. Frankly to face the facts is essential to mental and moral integrity, as well as to the explication of truth, the solution of problems, and the guidance of conduct.

When both sides—or where there are many sides, all sides—are brought into view in a just perspective, the next step is to find their synthetic relationship. In order to understand the nature of *synthesis* there should be excluded from it the things which it is not. Synthesis is not (1) *combination*, in which the juxtaposed sides are brought together in a mechanical, external contact. Nor is it (2) *fusion*, in which the two contrapletes are fused, or intermingled, so that each is lost in a common neutral mixture. Furthermore synthesis is not (3) *compromise*. Doubtless compromise has its place in adjusting strained relationships but it is inferior to synthesis, since it cannot effect the same kind, or degree, of harmony.

#### THE RESOLUTION OF TENSION

In contrast with these pseudo-syntheses genuine synthesis is unitive and creative. By means of it something new and contributive is added to already existent entities. One of the chief values of synthesis lies in resolving *tensions*. Not infrequently the mind meets with a tension between two complementary entities or points of view, which needs to be resolved. This does not apply to the sharp conflict between good and evil—for there the relation is not tension but *contention* requiring decision—but rather to the relation between two forms of good, or truth, which seem to be pulling against each other. Synthesis resolves this tension by laying hold of the underlying, uniting bond, discovering why and how it has been obscured, and then resolving the tension in a vital, productive harmony.

In the field of theoretical dialectic one may find an instance of the resolution of tension in solving the apparently irreconcilable conflict between *freedom* and *determinism*. For upon the exercise of a discerning dialectic this tension may be not only relieved but even removed in a comprehensive synthesis which reveals how each is essential to the other. In the field of education there is the tension between individualism and discipline, and in government the tension between liberty and authority. That in each case

a synthesis is possible is the growing conviction of those working at the problems arising in these great areas of human activity.

In the province of practical dialectic we may take the tension between Pacifism and National Defence as offering a good subject for attempted synthesis. The aim of the advocates of both of these policies we may assume to be to end, or at least to avert, war. Yet they are apparently at complete variance as to how this is to be done. Emphasizing the common aim, the question becomes: Is there some way of resolving the tension? Suppose the Pacifist to say: War is an absolute evil, and I refuse to engage in any war. To this the Defencist replies: Granted; but self-defence is not war. The Pacifist responds: It *is* war, if it is aggression. The Defencist replies: But it is not aggression in case it is strictly confined to defence measures within the nation's own borders exactly defined at a certain distance from the boundary or coast line. To this let us assume, although perhaps too sanguinely, that the Pacifist agrees. In reaching some such agreement neither abandons his principle, yet they find a common ground. The Pacifist becomes a Defence Pacifist and the Defencist becomes a Pacifist Defender. This is not surrender, nor compromise. It is a practical synthetic union of two aspects of a common aim between which there is tension. I offer this merely as an illustration (with whose solution the reader will probably not agree) of the method of dialectic.

Morally, the resolution of tension calls for the spirit of tolerance and often for mutual forgiveness, as well as for forbearance, before a synthesis can be effected, whose fruitage is the concordat, whose method is conference and whose supreme achievement is *reconciliation*, followed by adjustment and synthetic advance. Not without good reason did the apostle of love, himself a great dialectician, look forward to "the Great Reconciliation" as the consummation of the ages.

#### THE INDIVIDUAL VERSUS SOCIETY

Perhaps the most crucial and imperative dialectic in which the general mind is now, somewhat feverishly, engaged is that of securing a true balance between *individualism* and *sociality*. Which, if either, is the greater and how shall they be related to one another? At the present time there is a disposition, stronger than ever before, theoretically at least, to magnify society at the expense of the individual. It is not likely, however, to prevail.

Selfhood roots deep in experience and cannot be resolved away into any form or degree of social consciousness. On the other hand, experience affirms with equal certainty the reality of other selves and will not consent to their being subordinated to the individual ego; for the sharing of common experience is essential to individual experience.

Here is a dialectic clear, assertive and urgent, one that demands unqualified recognition and a balanced synthesis in which the rights and duties of the individual and of society are both fully preserved. It has long been held with great tenacity, at least in America, that democracy is built solely upon the rights of the individual; but a larger and truer understanding of democracy is coming to recognize that its genius, and therefore its ultimate achievement, lies in a right synthetic correlation of the individual and society.

Another vital dialectical issue over which the world is at present at sword's point is that of *nationalism versus internationalism*. The synthesis here clearly lies in *patriotism*—the motto of which is: My country *for* (not against) humanity.

#### THE SYNTHETIC MIND

Synthesis is the culmination of dialectic—minor syntheses leading to more comprehensive ones, and these looking toward universal synthesis. As such, synthesis is a process or instrument of logic, and one which no rational being can avoid using—therefore to be used well. Synthesis is also more than this. It becomes the disposition and habit, the prevailing attitude and spirit, of what may be called the synthetic mind.

The synthetic mind, whether technically trained or not, is the Socratic, Platonic, philosophic, and we may add, the Christian mind. For it is the comprehensive, catholic, tolerant, magnanimous, charitable mind. It aims at Plato's ideal, to be as like God as possible, which is also that of Jesus: Ye therefore shall be perfect (impartial) as your Father in heaven is perfect. It is the mind that trusts experience, probes it, tests it, seeks to know both sides, all sides, surveys things in the large, sees when decision must be made between conflicting opposites and when they are contrapletal moves toward a synthetic, constructive interpretation and adjustment.

## The Quarter's Fiction

JOHN C. SCHROEDER

**T**HREE are so many recently published novels that it is impossible to devise a principle of selection which will function with any degree of justice whatever. One can depend only upon the dubious criterion of one's own taste. At least this seems reasonably sure—that none of them is a great book; many of them are truly excellent; all of them are interesting. Together they cover a wide range of concern. Each has its own virtue to bring light upon a human problem here and a social issue there.

*Fame Is the Spur* is the narrative of the political victory and the personal defeat of a great labor leader in the England of the last generation. It is not the biography of a particular person. Hamer Shawcross might be the distillation of a combination of MacDonald and Snowden and two or three other leaders in the rise of the Labor Party to power. What is important about him is that he is the incarnation of Lord Acton's dictum: "Power always corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely." His father and mother are simple, hard-working people living on the fringe of insecurity in industrial Manchester. They give every protection possible to their only son, and while he grows up in poverty, a recollection he loves to exploit when he has become famous, he was never actually its victim. Bright, precocious, he becomes a lay preacher as his father had been before him. (Mr. Spring understands how significant the role of the lay preacher was in the development of the labor movement.) But the needs of the workers inflame his ambition and he moves from the pulpit into the arena of politics as his growing sense of personal power pulls him along. Subtly, perhaps unconsciously, he is forever exploiting the people he believes he is serving. As a member of Parliament he is able to rationalize every comfort and every honor, persuading his conscience that his rise to power is only for the good of the miners and the artisans he represents. Imperceptibly he grows soft. He never knows that the temper is gradually going out of the blade he wields. His ambition and his cleverness enable him to use everyone who loves him for his own ends—his mother, his wife, his friends—although he is always sure he is making sacrifices for their sakes. His fatal gift of words leads him on.

(Mr. Spring is extraordinary in his ability to compose the speeches a Hamer Shawcross would have made.)

As counterpoint to the easy melody of his life is the somber theme of the career of Arnold Ryerson, a less gifted and more honest boyhood companion who also grows up to be a labor leader living in poverty among the miners he seeks to serve. The story covers the exciting years of the history of the Labor Party to give the book a background of stability and reality. It is excellent medicine for all of us who, having become comfortable, need a jolt of honesty to force us to remember the courage we once had and the convictions that gave our lives moral vitality.

*The Earth Is the Lord's* is a biography of Genghis Khan—inevitably fiction since we know so little about him, but nevertheless perhaps more actually than factually true. Miss Caldwell's previous books have given us the story of the munitions makers; now she gives us the tale of a dictator. She begins with the birth of Temujin into one of the nomadic tribes of the Gobi and follows his ruthless career until he is the conqueror of all the Karait Turks. With great imaginative skill she reveals how the minds of nomadic barbarians respond to the superior culture about them; how a merciless will stirs the tribes to support a conquest which involves endless struggle and cruelty. She cannot resist the temptation to allegorize her narrative so that the contemporary scene is forever peeking through the strategies and tactics of a conqueror long ago. But then, perhaps his techniques were not so different. Certainly Goebbels' "Audacity and still more audacity" might well have been Genghis Khan's slogan. True, there was no reason then for a romantic rebellion against reason or a sense of incapacity rising out of a mood of failure to meet the moral demands of a scientific technology. Yet however much the parallel may be forced, the essential will to conquer is still there and for this reason the story is not without its point in our time.

*Random Harvest* gives us Mr. Hilton again. This time it is no *Mr. Chips* or a *Lost Horizon* but the same wonderful gift of story-telling compels the reading of this tale as it did the others. The plot centers about the problem of loss of memory. Charles Rainier, the son of a wealthy family, finds himself on a Liverpool park bench in 1919 able to remember only that he had been on reconnaissance duty and had heard a shell come screaming at him. Now he is a famous industrialist, a leader in Parliament, a man destined for the heights. He is married to his former secretary who since their

marriage has become a famous hostess. The story starts when he meets Harrison, in whose sympathetic companionship he gradually pieces together the fragments of his forgotten life. This unknown period forever haunts him and he is partly frightened and partly fascinated by what he might have done. The reader is under bonds not to betray the denouement of the story, which does not come until the last page. This reviewer frankly thought it meretricious. Nevertheless, Mr. Hilton's capacity as a storyteller in maintaining suspense, in the never-failing charm of his style, in his telling characterizations of contemporary types, guarantees a wonderful tale which once started cannot be laid aside until it is finished.

*Hold Autumn in Your Hand* gives us the sharecropper sympathetically portrayed. This is by no manner of means to imply that Mr. Sessions is either sentimental or unrealistic about him. Sam Tucker is a man with everything against him but who has enough strength and valor to enjoy life. He meets his desperate situation cheerfully; he knows the meaning of hard work; deals with cruel obstacles resourcefully; is far from stupid as he tries to find ways to meet the elemental demands of his poverty-stricken family.

Here are the short and simple annals of the poor which reveal a sort of magnificence in the life of a humble man. He loves his wife and children and treats them with courtesy and love. In addition he uncomplainingly suffers with Granny—a malicious old woman who would be amusing only so long as one did not have to live with her. Sam fights for his family as he tries to support them by farming in the Texas black bottom land. He is always cheerful, not because he is stupid but because he is a likable and brave man. Illiterate, he is pathetic in his high hope for his children's schooling. Harassed by Granny and by hard luck he maintains his zest for life. He never gets anywhere and probably never will, but he is more than worth his salt in this world and he and his kind give it hope.

The title of *Holy Suburb* frightened me. I was sure that in it self-righteousness would be castigated and respectability scorned. Instead, the story of the Admires and their life in Epworth College is told with sympathy and kindness savored with the salt of a gentle realism. Papa Admire wanted to give his children an education and so he moves his family from the farm into the city where they may attend this little Methodist college set not far from the State University. Papa was a loyal churchman on the conservative side. Mother was timorous and a little ashamed of her educational limita-

tions. The children were awed by the prospect of going to a college which their father was sure was the center of life and learning. Of course, Epworth College had all the characteristics of its kind. The students were shocked by the paganism of the State University and aped its sophistications. They could not understand the young professor just out of Harvard who was fired because he smoked. I must confess that his precious aestheticism would have irritated the most urbane. The Admirers are so typical of good church people at the turn of the century. Papa is inclined to be overlong and over-fervent in prayer, to the distress of his children. Mother can be pretty pious on occasion. The college is victimized by hollow revivals and petty politics. The children are fine youngsters who may do the foolish things that children do but have remarkable good sense nevertheless. But all the family is loyal to one another and their little sins of respectability are forgiven because they loved much. Miss Atkins does not spare the ridiculous elements in the life of a denominational college and reveals the petty snobbery and prudishness that characterized it a generation ago. However, she loves it too and her story seems true because it is never venomous and never cheap.

Praxiteles Swan, *Lone Star Preacher*, is a synthetic portrait of the warrior parson in the Civil War. A graduate of Princeton, he goes to Texas, where he becomes a member of one of the pioneer Conferences there and soon achieves legendary status as he uses his physical strength to wage war on unrighteousness. When he whispered, his voice could be heard half a mile away. His Christianity was robust and daring and he would as soon bump the heads of the sinners into insensibility as fervently pray for the erring. When the war started it was inevitable that he should say "From this day forth I serve the God of Battles." Off he went with his Bible but soon he had a sword in the other hand. He stood his ground with Longstreet and worshiped his leader Lee. He never questioned the right of his side nor did he speculate about the reason for his fighting, either as an individual or as a Christian. Like one of the soldiers who when questioned answered "But maybe I've got rights I haven't heard tell about, an' if so, I'm fighting for them too," he fought only because his people were fighting. He was never disturbed by his religion as he rode before his men. He never had to question himself, since he had the Old Testament and could rally his troops to battle by quotations from its most martial passages. Praxiteles Swan is a colorful legend. One dreads to think lest now he should come back.

Just the day before I read *Seventh Avenue* it happened that I had a conference with an official of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. There was one point of view about the union; the novel presents its opposite. Joe tries to manufacture dresses, but he is forever hounded by labor racketeers and chiseling salesmen. He persuades Julie, who has a flair for designing dresses, to work with him. It means that she has to leave her husband Carl and the children in the suburbs and go to fight in the ruthless war of industry on Seventh Avenue in the garment center. She designs a dress that ought to make Joe's fortune, but the regulations of the union and of the industry force him to try to dodge the rules by setting up a cutting shop in New Jersey. Eventually they are driven to the South in an effort to escape the power of the unions, only to be found there and their shop demolished. The author knows all about the garment trade and the book gives the reader the picture of a business ruthless in its competition. It is a cutthroat struggle not only between capital and labor but among the manufacturers as well. Joe, who has risen from poverty through the unions, is supposed to be sympathetic toward them, but the book actually portrays them as they were before their control was taken from the hands of the Communists. The people in the story—bosses, buyers, pattern-makers, cutters—are real. It is my own judgment that the union is not justly portrayed. Nevertheless, the business is still a bitter warfare and *Seventh Avenue* lifts the curtain to show us what is behind a bargain dress in a store window.

People will soon be arguing about whether *H. M. Pulham, Esquire* is a better book than *The Late George Apley*. Pulham is a contemporary member of the same social class. He comes out of New England plutocracy, goes to the right school and to Harvard, marries the right girl, votes the right ticket and attends the right church. Two things happen to him which threaten to overthrow the complete control which the Back Bay tradition has over him. He goes to the war where he plays the hero, but where more importantly he learns that those who did not go to the right school are nevertheless interesting people. After the war, while the spirit of adventure is still upon him, he works in New York in a fantastic advertising office and meets Marvin Myles with whom he falls in love. He never forgets her and he never understands her, because the tradition of his class captures him again so that he can never again escape.

Then there are two other important characters in the book—Bo-jo

Brown, a football hero who never grows beyond adolescence, and Bill King, who did not fit at Harvard and continues to rebel for the rest of his life. At times his rebellion appears almost as childish as Brown's silly and selfish conformity.

Mr. Marquand knows his types and he dissects them with such a sharp knife that they do not know they have been cut. Harry Pulham is dull and stupid really and yet he has his points. But he never gets beyond his uncritical affection for "The Head" of his school, which makes one shudder in the realization that of such is the aristocracy of America. You cannot despise him; you can only pity him. The Bo-jo Browns of this world would be amusing if they were not so cruel, and Marquand shows no pity for them. The conversation between him and Pulham, when the latter has just returned from France and has to listen to Brown's childish babble about the Yale game, is as cruel description as an account of a bullfight. Perhaps one ought to know Boston to appreciate Marquand. But the Pulhams, even though they would not believe it, are everywhere. Probably they will not recognize their portrait in all the accuracy of Marquand's skilled craftsmanship. Henry Pulham is too pathetic to be loved; too stupid to be admired; too weak to be respected. Yet he cannot quite be scorned and he remains as a type of our aristocracy which probably will not last long but which may go on longer than we think. His kind, whatever weaknesses they may have, have a surprising capacity for keeping control.

*Fame Is The Spur.* By Howard Spring. New York: The Viking Press. 1940.  
726 pp. \$2.75.

*The Earth Is the Lord's.* By Taylor Caldwell. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.  
1941. 550 pp. \$2.75.

*Random Harvest.* By James Hilton. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1941. 327 pp.  
\$2.50.

*Hold Autumn in Your Hand.* By George Sessions Perry. New York: The Viking Press. 249 pp. \$2.00.

*Holy Suburb.* By Elizabeth Atkins. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 348 pp. \$2.50.

*Lone Star Preacher.* By John A. Thomason. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.  
296 pp. \$2.75.

*Seventh Avenue.* By Dorothy Meyersberg. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 288 pp.  
\$2.50.

*H. M. Pulham, Esquire.* By James F. Marquand. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.  
432 pp. \$2.50.

## Book Reviews

**An Outline of Church History.**  
Edited by CAROLINE DUNCAN-JONES and EDWARD SHILLETO. George Allen & Unwin. 4 Vols. 2/6 each.

ONCE in a while I find a treasure about which my enthusiasm must make me a sort of pest to my friends. Before I pause to reason why, or to consult my sense of etiquette, I find myself calling them on the telephone or writing them notes to tell them of my discovery and to ask them to share it with me. Such is my feeling about these four volumes—an outline of church history from the Acts of the Apostles to the Reformation—comprising forty-odd chapters contributed by about half that number of England's foremost scholars.

To attempt anything like an analysis of these books is, within the limits of this review, impossible. Here scholarship is at its best: Roman Catholic and Protestant. And there is, withal, a remarkable unity and continuity. Unmistakable erudition wears the livery of a simple, gracious and compelling style. Practically every aspect of the Church's life, thought and expansion receives a deserved and clarifying attention.

To visit the primitive Church with C. H. Dodd, E. G. Selwyn, and Cyril Bailey; to inspect the beginnings of Christian thought and philosophy with Nathaniel Micklem and Canon Raven; to become acquainted with hermits and monks through C. C. Martindale, or to probe the heights and depths of Scholastic reasoning with Father D'Arcy and Dean Matthews is, each and all of them, a rewarding experience which awaits the reader of these volumes. Moreover, the

price of the four books is, in the student's edition, but a little over two dollars. I repeat: here is a gold mine, rich and shining, and though it takes no fortune to possess it, that man is unfortunate who will miss it.

HOBART D. MCKEEHAN.  
The Abbey Church,  
Huntingdon, Pa.

**Faith Is the Answer.** By SMILEY BLANTON and NORMAN VINCENT PEALE. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. \$2.00.

NEARLY forty years ago William James laid the foundation in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. He dealt with the sick soul and the divided self with about all the adeptness and thoroughness of a modern psychiatrist combined with the depth of religious conviction of a true prophet. In more recent years a few pastors have dabbled in psychiatry but rarely have attained to more than amateurish success. Still less have psychiatrists ventured to major in the religious emphasis, although many have admitted a definite interest. But that the two should go hand in hand is so perfectly clear that it now seems strange that we have been so slow in putting them to work together.

The co-authors of this volume have put the entire church world greatly in their debt by telling this simple yet stirring story of how science and religion, rightly related, may be used to lift life to a new level for struggling and despairing multitudes. They have demonstrated how great is the need that science and religion should collaborate in a careful diagnosis of the sick soul. As we read

we are reminded of how Jesus seemed always to take into account the entire spiritual background of each individual. We who have been so prone to wholesale, stereotyped methods find ourselves realizing how crude we have been, and, at times, so tragically cruel. We recall that there was a time when the medical doctor prescribed one of three things no matter what the ailment; the water cure, bleeding, or a purgative. In our religious practice we have been guilty of offering less than that. All were supposed to go through the same identical ordeal or they were not "saved."

These two doctors, in closest consultation, study every detail of each individual case history and make the diagnosis. Then, because they know the technique, they are able to apply the healing power of faith just where and when it is most needed, and to make possible the restoration to health of an ailing soul. Here are all the power and effectiveness of the old-time revival applied reverently and scientifically, which is to say, applied correctly, for the redemption of man. The book does not theorize, it does not argue. It simply says, come and see. Every pastor who reads will be reassured of the efficacy of the power of faith which the Master Himself used when "He healed them all."

LEON B. RANDALL.

Buffalo, New York.

**Christianity: An Inquiry Into Its Nature and Truth.** By HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

THE Bross Prize book by Professor Harris Franklin Rall well deserves its high recognition. But the book will be misjudged unless it is understood in the light of its purpose. It does not purport to be a book "for other theologians to

read"; thus it does not pretend to be a report on new researches nor a technical manual of theology. It is, rather, "close to the life of humanity" and is intended for average preachers, students, and laymen. As such it is brilliant and dignified popularization without vulgarization or compromise with truth. It offers a sound and readable survey of liberal thought about the nature of the Christian faith, its setting in the world of modern science and social change, its conception of God, and its chief problems.

*Christianity* reveals comprehensive scholarship. The author knows his subject both historically and as a contemporary force; he knows how the leading minds of the modern world have wrestled with it; and he sees it in its larger relations. He is more interested in the universally religious elements in Christianity than he is in its special rites, cults, and creeds. It is really rare to find a book on theology which at no point wastes time on trivialities and nonessentials. Although faith in Jesus and in God is the heart of Christianity for Professor Rall, yet he lays chief stress on the principle of life and growth in our religion, rather than on "the faith once delivered to the saints." When he treats revelation, he treats it in the context of experience. One arises from the reading of such a book with feelings of refreshment and vigor, with hope for the future, with more confidence in God than in creedal infallibility.

These words of commendation do not mean that the book is perfect. There are times when even the man on the street will find the discussion a little too simple; some of the great problems are passed off too lightly. One could wish for more concrete and vigorous handling of the great social problems of our age; they are mentioned, but more is needed. Despite considerable discussion of science and religion, the problem of verification—how

can we test our beliefs?—does not receive adequate analysis. The reader would welcome a fuller and more concrete discussion of the permanence of Christianity, its relation to other religions, and especially—in America as well as in Europe—its relation to the Jewish religion. The intelligent and appreciative treatment of recent thought about the problem of evil finally falls back a little too easily on the inevitability of evil and on the spirit of humility, without carrying through to the end the problem of the relation of evil to God. These criticisms, however, are but signs that the book is an excellent one to stimulate thought.

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN.  
Boston University.

**American Mirror.** By HALFORD E. LUCCOCK. New York. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

PERSPECTIVE is an essential element in the understanding of the literature of any period. It is the aim of Doctor Luccock's new volume to help to give such perspective for the 1930's in America. That the aim is realized with distinguished success will be widely attested. For the great bulk of readers, these pages will bring the sense of discovery and new insight. The dominant trends of the period will appear in clearer outline. Their organic relation both to what has gone before and to the actual life of the immediate years will become more intelligible.

For those already widely read in the novels, plays and poetry of this "doleful" decade, *American Mirror* will challenge certain earlier appraisals and confirm others. For those seeking to catch up on the more significant literature of these years, Doctor Luccock will prove to be a literary Baedeker of commanding attractiveness and power. And all of this

is undertaken without the slightest presumptuousness. The author well knows, and cautions us explicitly, that no finally sound judgment of a period can be written at such close range. Nor are his interest and judgment purely literary. Rather his is the important object of helping to distinguish those trends and values which are spiritually significant for the life of the decade, so far as that is now possible.

Although the literature of the 30's had very little consciously ethical or religious motivation, it nevertheless rings spiritually true in its candid picture of the America that is. Through all of the confusion of the decade, with its desire for escape, its driving economic interest, its haunting hunger motif, its persistent sense of the tragedy of wasted land and life, there is an implicit demand for new recognition of the worth and dignity of human life. Whether we be looking at the literature of the depression, or at the literature of labor, or at that of the land, we find a deeply moral sense strongly pervasive.

It is striking that the most significant writing of the decade has been done, for the most part, by persons outside the Christian Church. Indeed most writers have completely neglected religion as any explicit factor in American life. Where reference to organized religion occurs, the attitude is highly critical. Nevertheless, through much of the writing there is a groping for something deeper and more real. Often there is penetrating spiritual insight. The literature of the 1930's is, therefore, something for the religious mind to ponder. Not only are there important spiritual values in it, but it is indeed an "American mirror."

EDWARD THOMAS RAMSDELL.  
Vanderbilt University,  
Nashville, Tenn.

**The Four Pillars of Democracy.** By  
EDGAR J. GOODSPED. New York:  
Harper & Brothers. \$1.75.

DOCTOR GOODSPED, as usual, has given us a book full of interest and persuasive reasoning. Written in a facile style, one reads it easily.

In the first chapter he warns and prepares his reader by mentioning the partisan ways of putting contrasts of great movements. "The advocates of one present their own cause in its loftiest, most ideal aspect, but the others in the lowest forms that can be dug out of the past—for example, the mistakes of science with the ideals of religion and vice versa." This widens the breach, while an unbiased study of the motives of each would discover enough that is common to invite sympathetic co-operation.

The Four Pillars of Democracy are four such movements. Faith of Science, Faith of Humanism, Faith of Society and Faith of Religion.

After reading a few pages, it becomes evident that Doctor Goodspeed is not dealing with fluting or lilywork, rather with the foundations of these strong supporters. He contends that science is a great cause, an aim, idea. It has an urge to seek and discover truth of the universe as religionists have in seeking truth in God and His Kingdom, but with this difference. Real science has nothing to do with the application of its findings, whether when utilized they bring forth good or evil. It is for them to expose truth for truth's sake only.

His point that truthfulness and honesty among scientists is unexcelled, is amply supported. "To falsify scientific findings is a sin. Science, too, has its sanctities." Men of science are men of faith; ever believing in the faithfulness of Nature and that she will yield hitherto

hidden truth to their steadfast and diligent seeking.

In a similar way the humanist has faith in the worth and potentialities of Man. He attributes value to every product of man's mind, soul and hand, and the whole gamut of human experiences.

"But of all men, the humanist is peculiarly concerned for beauty. . . . He sees beauty as a part of man's birth-right. Humanism aims to bring things to pass. It aims to defend and preserve the great values of human culture."

The chapter on "Faith of Society" deals with man's faith in human relations, social, commercial and political groups, and makes us aware of our unconscious trusting, day by day, numerous individuals and organized portions of society.

"The synthesis which combines and completes these faiths," says Doctor Goodspeed, "is the faith of religion." It cannot stop where science does. It sees life whole. It invades man's heart with the Spirit of Truth; with love and good-will, that all discovered truth may bless and not destroy mankind.

Humanism needs religion to keep humanity humane. "To offer man only that which is human is to betray him."

Stronger and more lasting are these four pillars than any immediate political policies of democracy. When faith in God and Nature, faith in Man, and organized society, faith in the worth of the individual, faith in ethical and aesthetic values, are kept alive in the consciousness of a self-governing people, whose government never can be better than their own judgment and intelligence, we shall approximate, if not realize, a democracy of peace, justice and good will.

RAYMOND L. FORMAN.  
The Church of the Saviour,  
Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

**Jesus Christ the Same.** By JAMES MOFFATT. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. \$2.00.

THE heart of Christianity lies in the eternal significance of an historic person. When a theologian makes that claim, it is sometimes discounted, but when a noted historian bears that testimony his words are doubly worthy of note. In this volume containing the Shaffer Lectures at Yale Divinity School, James Moffatt presents his belief "in the divine humanity of Jesus as seen in historic perspective." Despite occasional excursions into textual criticism and exegetical details, here speaks not so much the New Testament critic as the lover of literature, the student of church history, and the devout Christian believer. For the famous Bible translator is all of these, and out of the richness of a long life devoted to scholarship he weaves a testimony to the place of Christ in human faith.

The critical assumptions with which he approaches the gospel evidence are those of the best scholarship of today. "All that we know of Jesus is through the fellowship and worship of the Church which looked to Him as a Lord whose life had not ended at death. . . . The Gospels are not objective history written with a dispassionate regard for facts. Their interest in what Jesus had been on earth arose from men who were conscious of His living power and presence in the fellowship and worship of the community" (21, 48-49). But he points out that all ancient history had practical objectives. In his own application of these positions he is distinctly conservative, and sometimes quite severe in his condemnation of those who would go farther.

A plea for the real humanity of Jesus leads Moffatt into discussions of His prayer life, and the patristic discussions of

the omniscience of Christ. The authority of Jesus is approached from the standpoint of recognition that He is the one who determines human destiny. Though Jesus is the "pattern as well as the power of faith," the distinct limitations on the imitation of Jesus within the New Testament are recognized. This Jesus was unique in the sense that "His was not one life among many." Though He is never called "eternal," in the New Testament, yet His significance may be summed up in the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews as the "same yesterday, today, and forever." He is at present what He had been in His earthly life.

But this reviewer missed a clear-cut statement of exactly *what* that was. The author is certainly right in rejecting any distinction between "the religion of Jesus and a religion about Jesus." His discussion of the futile attempts at harmonization of the Gospel records on the part of Church Fathers clearly indicates that that is not a road to be followed. We are quite ready to believe that our knowledge of Jesus, though partial, is nevertheless genuine. And if Jesus Christ is eternally the same, then the eternal Christ cannot be different from what He was in His earthly ministry. But what was that—in as exact a statement as can be given?

That statement seems to have fallen outside the author's purpose. He gives us a noble personal tribute and a survey of the Church's belief about Christ rather than an exact estimate of that divine humanity in its detailed features. As such, it should be read and judged, and as such it is a noteworthy addition to the books which set in radiance that one face through which the grace of God shone upon sinful men.

CLARENCE TUCKER CRAIG,  
Oberlin College,  
Oberlin, Ohio.

**Preaching in These Times.** Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

For many years *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* gave two entire pages of its Monday edition to sermons, and was subscribed to by some thirty-five hundred ministers chiefly residing in the Middle West. What the subscribers found valuable was the report of their fellow preachers: what topics they chose, how they treated them, and the ideas and illustrations which contemporary preaching used.

With the passing of Beecher, Abbott, and Hillis, whose utterances were the paper's main interest, the words of other preachers being used as filler, and with the coming of the radio, the Monday sermon edition of the *Eagle* passed into history.

Yale Divinity School has done a similar service for the ministry this year in printing this volume. Instead of having one man give these annual lectures it selected six lecturers. They represent the Protestant Church in several sections of the United States and various communions. Two men are from New York, one from Rhode Island, one from Georgia, one from Ohio and one from Illinois. Denominationally they are from the Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist, Baptist and Episcopal Churches. The title describes the purpose of the book and its contents: Preaching in These Times.

Ministers and laymen will find these addresses interesting and informing for many reasons. Phillips Brooks defined preaching as truth mediated through personality. Here we meet six real persons, each a man of his times. Here is truth, truth seen through a dome of many-colored glass and yet with some of the radiance of eternity.

Elmore McKee takes forty-eight pages

of a one-hundred-and-seventy-three-page book to proclaim "Leadership Uncensored"; Arthur Bradford thirteen pages to declare "Preachers Must Listen." Both men are deeply concerned about the present war, but they line up on different sides of the searching question as to what a man should preach when his country goes to war. It would help many preachers to sit down with both these men before they preach the sermons they soon will feel moved to preach.

George Buttrick has some wise things to say about the "Whole Gospel," what it is and what it is not. Both individualists and socialists can read that lecture with profit. He has the literary art of putting things well and borrowing his illustrations from a wide field.

Ernest Fremont Tittle makes an earnest plea for the personal virtue of humility, and sets this over against the glory of nations and the splendor of churches. Edwin Poteat dwells on the dilemma of civilization, and urges men to choose while there is yet time. "Old Wine in New Bottles," is the figure which Hyatt Smart uses to keep his readers aware of the need of theology which is old and yet new. All these men have a Christ-centered faith which holds Him up before their readers and urges them to share His mind and Spirit.

J. HOWARD MELISH.

Church of the Holy Trinity,  
Brooklyn, New York.

**Living Religions and a World Faith.**

By WILLIAM ERNEST HOCKING.  
New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

WHAT are the rightful future relationships of the great religions to one another? What are the processes making for a world faith and what is to be the role of Christianity?

Such are the questions that are given significant answers in this series of Hibbert Lectures by the Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University. The book will provoke controversy because it deals in a strong and lucid manner with important living issues. In style and in some of the positions taken this book is in sharp contrast with *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* by Hendrik Kraemer, a volume which was widely read and discussed in connection with the Madras Conference two years ago.

These lectures are a seasoned product, the outcome of reflection vitalized by wide association with scholars and common people in many lands. The author finds that the religion of people, the world over, is more alike than are the separate religions to which they belong. In every country it has a sound kernel. Beneath the crust of superstition is a glow of genuine religious life.

In the changes taking place in oriental religions the author sees at work a capacity to absorb new ideas and to make adjustments which enables them to survive when by most signs they should be ready to perish. The great philosophical literature of the world is now the possession of all the major languages. "As a common body of thought it aids in leading the minds within all religions toward a common goal. . . . The more abominable of the tenets of the religions . . . are shuffled off by a silent process of oblivion. . . . It extinguishes quietly the grosser errors and ushers men with equal silence toward a common mind."

Since the minds of men are being wafted in various ways toward a community of outlook, should not the growth of a world faith be left to the kindly offices of time? To this suggestion the author gives an emphatic No. The differences between religions are too important, the latent conflicts between them are

too menacing to admit of any *laissez faire* policy. Positive efforts to establish a concrete religion for mankind are needed. Such efforts are sustained chiefly by the missionary impulse, and this impulse the author recognizes as valid and, in fact, inescapable. "Those who try to bring mankind to their own specific way of seeing God . . . have left marks on history of which mankind will ever think with reverence as well as gratitude, and which would have been possible to no other conceivable motive."

Three ways in which a positive effort may be made to move toward a world faith are stated and evaluated; the way of radical displacement, the way of synthesis, and the way of reconception. The way of radical displacement, heretofore widely accepted in missionary circles, is examined and vigorously rejected. Synthesis and reconception are explained and warmly commended.

The author feels that there is "a certain *noblesse oblige* in the relations among religions; those who have traveled far in the path of self-understanding have an obligation to those less skilled in self-explanation." "The principle is that the ideas of others, like all living entities, must be given the benefit of their direction. They are presumably in partial error. If so, we always have the choice between two comments: either 'You are on the wrong track'; or else 'This is what you are trying for.' The latter remark calls for a far severer labor of thought."

The conclusion is reached: "As a privilege, the Christ symbol 'will draw all men'; as a threat never. . . . When '*In hoc signo*' ceases to be a battle cry it will ascend as token of another conquest, the conquest of estrangement among the seekers of God."

A. W. WASSON.  
New York City.

**War, Peace and Change.** By JOHN FOSTER DULLES. New York: Harper & Brothers. \$1.75.

ANY volume emanating from the pen of John Foster Dulles immediately commands the widest audience. He occupies a position of distinction as an authority on foreign affairs. On many occasions he has represented officially the United States Government; he has spoken widely and has written prolifically on every phase of this subject during the past quarter of a century. Mr. Dulles always brings to his task an apprehension of moral and spiritual values. He made a large contribution to the report of the Oxford Conference in "The Church and the World of Nations."

*War, Peace and Change*, written at the beginning of the present war, makes interesting reading, in the light of events of the last eighteen months. He pictures vividly the transition from the old professional wars, and glimpses the effect of totalitarian conflict. In this new kind of total war civilians are "no longer spectators but participants in the bloody arena." The general feeling of mankind today seems to be that "we are in the grip of some evil force which is beyond the power of man to master."

Mr. Dulles analyzes what total war would mean and then traces, as very few men in the world can do, the efforts needed to establish peace in the world. Then he discusses change, and asserts that too often peace has been identified with the status quo.

The basic problem he conceives to be the great historic effort through the centuries "to reconcile selfishness with generosity. The elimination of the war system is the final and most difficult phase of this agelong effort."

The principles of solution are to be found in molding the human spirit "so

that desires tend to become reconciled and harmonious and provide something alternative to force." He describes here the achievements in the field of individual and national life by which conflict has been eliminated.

His chapters on "The Prerequisites to Totalitarian War," "False or Inadequate Solutions" and "The Inadequacy of Treaties" lay bare the mistakes in the path that has been traveled since the Versailles Conference.

Perhaps it is in the chapter "The Application of the Ethical Principle," that you find Mr. Dulles at his best. He does not believe that the problem of war is one impossible to cope with. The vital difference between it and all the other conflicts that mankind has successfully overcome is really one of magnitude. The world has got to think in terms of larger maps. It has to envision the successful methods that have led mankind to happiness in close relationships within a state and carry them out into the broader field of world life. The early Greek democracies succumbed largely because those tiny entities developed no relationship between themselves. Our world of sovereign nations has developed no conception of duty to each other.

Toward his conclusion Mr. Dulles draws attention to what the method of procedure should be if mankind is finally to move toward the abolition of war. He feels that there exist "religious and humanitarian organizations well qualified to vitalize ideals that would transcend national lines. There are peace organizations and organizations for the dissemination of information on foreign affairs which can do much to dissipate the fear ideology."

There is an increasing tendency all over the world to think of the pattern world life will assume at the conclusion of the struggle. The issue today is not the simple one between the Axis powers

and a prewar world. Increasing conviction indicates that whatever the result of the war there will be vast changes in the structure of society. Change is inevitable. In the evolution toward successful change, treaties and politics—the machinery of international organization—will play a part, but basically the faith and hope, ethics, idealism and power of religion must play an important part.

HARRY N. HOLMES.

New York, N. Y.

### Is the Kingdom of God Realism?

By E. STANLEY JONES. New York:  
Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. \$2.00.

DR. E. STANLEY JONES has probably made his largest single contribution to the thought of his generation in this book. It comes far down the road of his thinking and bears upon it the marks of a maturity and fundamental quality that may well qualify it to be Doctor Jones's *magnum opus*. The author has been doing thinking and writing in many lines—devotional, missionary and social—but in this book he moves into the central conceptions of the Christian gospel and expounds a thesis which holds within its central ideas the answer to the most acute of our modern problems.

There have been many books written on the Kingdom of God. The concept has aroused varied interpretations. These have often been more academic than practical, more scholarly than vital. Here is an interpretation of the Kingdom of God in terms of realism that has tremendous implications for everyday Christian living. Its careful reading cannot but bring disturbing questions to any open mind, and if taken in all their far-flung significance cannot but bring on a Christian revolution.

The reader must expect no technical philosophical discussion of realism. What

Doctor Jones is thinking of is the question as to whether the Kingdom will work. Is it "a beautiful but impractical idea which breaks its delicate wings upon the hard facts of real life" or is it "the ground plan of the universe"? Perhaps haziness over the answer to this question explains why men do not take the Christian religion seriously. The affirmative conviction that Jesus' idea of Life, set forth under the imagery of the Kingdom of God, holds for Doctor Jones all the thrill of a great vital discovery that makes real Good News to this generation. Listen to his personal credo:

"Whether it creates a revolution in the Christian Church, certainly it has created one in me. I see now as I have never seen the eternal fitness of the gospel—it fits the soul like a glove fits the hand. They are made for each other. But it not only fits the soul, it fits the body and the mind in the same fashion. Physically and mentally we are fashioned in every fiber and nerve cell to obey this Way as the law of life. To live in any other way is to live against oneself and hence to stultify oneself. This is also true of sociological living—the laws of human society when we really discover them are the laws of the Kingdom of God deeply embedded in the relationships of people, the way those relationships work when they work well and harmoniously.

"I have always believed these things, in rather a vague way, but now they have become overwhelming. I do not hold them any more—they hold me."

There is a real gospel in these pages. I list a few of the striking titles: Life's Answer From Life; The Kingdom of Heaven Is Within You; Anxieties and Illness; A Sense of Guilt and Ill Health; The Realism of the New Birth; Disciplined to the Kingdom. The fallacious paths in which our generation is walking

are clearly not only wrong but foolish. God is making "foolish the wisdom of this world." Our world debacle comes from a denial of the stark realism that love to one another and respect and co-operation between nations is not only sensible religion but good politics. Perhaps we have always known this as a theory but we have gone about as far toward the edge of the abyss denying it as a workable fact as we dare to go. One of the speakers at the Oxford Conference said: "Either the grace of God is going to be received or the world is going to pass under judgment." We stand in that judgment hall today. We have denied the workable practicality of Jesus' doctrine of the Kingdom.

Read this volume. Not simply to "see what Stanley Jones says in his latest book" but to ask seriously whether here is not a fundamentally new approach to preaching and perhaps the germ conception of an overdue Christian revolution.

PAUL B. KERN.

Nashville, Tennessee.

**En-Roeh: *The Prophecies of Isaiah the Seer with Nahum and Habakkuk.***

By W. A. WORDSWORTH. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$6.00.

THE book of Isaiah was one of the earliest to engage the attention and study of those who in these latter days have undertaken to explore the structure and backgrounds of the Biblical books. The battle over the "two Isaiahs" was vigorous and caused much excitement while it lasted, but it has long since subsided and discussions of this kind are no longer referred to in warlike terms. There is no return, however, to the thought of the book's original and supposedly sacred unity. Instead of two Isaiahs there are now several, and the book is generally

recognized as being composite, so that it includes passages of widely separated dates, backgrounds and authors. From words of Isaiah himself coming from 735 B. C. and after, the contents of the book reach so far down into later years that in the case of some passages it is difficult "to see how any part of the prophetic canon can be late enough to contain them." This does not mean that the problems raised by the book have all been solved, far from it. The problems simply advance and multiply.

And now after all these explorations have been made and many conclusions based on them have been reached, there appears this book which dismisses all the work done in recent times on the book of Isaiah and proceeds to translate and to expound it as wholly the work of Isaiah himself. It seems almost incredible that such a book should be written today. The author himself is aware of this anomaly for he says of his book, "It is probable that most students of the Old Testament . . . will be inclined to dismiss it as preposterous. Yet the idea that the whole book of Isaiah is the work of the son of Amoz and that the theme of the book concerning Immanuel and the Servant is a message about the Christ, is simply the tradition of the Catholic Church, received from the lips of Jesus Himself." It is upon this conviction that he has written his book.

He uses a word-play for his title. En, is from a Hebrew word which means both "eye" and "fountain." Roeh, is the word for "seer." Hence the title means either, Eye of the Seer, or, Fountain of the Seer, an equivocal title which the author considers justified in his book.

He holds that the consonants of the Hebrew text are trustworthy but that the Massoretic pointing is not, because it too often represents interpretations which, he thinks, the Massoretes wished to impose upon the consonantal text. On the basis

of rhythm and especially of word-plays as he has worked them out, he thinks he can recover original meanings which the work of the Massoretes has obscured.

He has devised the form "Yeabe," for Jehovah, and wants the accent on the "be" so that the reader will constantly be reminded of the association of the name with the verb, to be. He holds that the Immanuel of Chapter VII was a son born to Lo-Ruhahah, the daughter of Hosea, an actual person, pursued later by Ahaz and ultimately, in Isaiah's thought, merging into the Servant who, though an individual, "is also (like Abraham) the spiritual nation that is to grow from him." Habakkuk, Nahum and the Zechariah of Zechariah 9. 14 are contemporaries of Isaiah. Isaiah is the author of "at least half" of the Psalms. Job is a work of Isaiah inspired by the tragedy of Uzziah's leprosy. Isaiah is the compiler of the book of Proverbs which is throughout concerned with Messianic hopes.

This is enough to indicate the character of this incredible book. If the author is correct, not only has no valid work been done on the book of Isaiah by modern historical students of the Bible but the earlier traditional expositors have been equally misled and misleading. It has remained for this author to uncover the hidden lore (his word for thorah) which Isaiah had "sealed among his disciples" (Isaiah 8. 16)!

LINDSAY B. LONGACRE.

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**Can Religious Education Be Christian?** By HARRISON S. ELLIOTT.  
New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

THIS is a book which had to be written. The issues have been drawn more and more sharply between two conflicting conceptions of religious education. On the

one hand we have the conception of historic Protestantism, reaffirmed in recent years with vigor and warmth by the neo-orthodoxy. On the other hand we have the conception of education as experience under guidance, strongly influenced by the progressive movement in general education. The first regards the content of religious education as given, and would have educators limit themselves to the technique of the teaching art, whereby the great realities of the Christian religion may be insinuated into the receptive minds of pupils and gratefully accepted. The second regards the purpose of education as that of developing thinking, growing beings, fitted in character and ability to meet new situations. It sees education taking place at the point where historic culture and present living meet. Since there is no general agreement on what are "the great realities of the Christian religion," it expects the learner himself to enter creatively into the process of developing his Christian faith, with the accumulated traditions of the past undergoing retesting, reappraisal and reconstruction in the light of expanding experience.

When two points of view are so diametrically opposed to each other and so strongly asserted, it is time to get at the foundation on which each rests, for otherwise we are sure to go in one of two undesirable directions. Either we will go blithely on our way, ignoring or denying the validity of the arguments on the other side without utilizing them for the correction of our mistakes, or we will cease to try engaging in a truly educational process, because having found difficulty in the nurture of children and youth because of superficial and false elements in an educational approach, we too easily fall back upon the established authority of another day.

Professor Elliott accepts the basic pre-suppositions of religious education associ-

ated with the second position outlined above, and evaluates it in the light of a searching examination of the contrary position advanced by the neo-orthodoxy. His discussion takes us through a consideration of the use of the Bible, the nature of human knowledge, the place of sin and guilt in education, the development of Christlike character and a social strategy, the place of prayer and worship, and numerous related problems. He comes to the conclusion that not only can religious education be Christian, but that it will be Christian only when it is seen in close relation to the experience of the learner. Says he, "There is no one true interpretation which is its function to transmit. Rather, religious education is an enterprise in which historical experiences and conceptions are utilized in a process by which individuals and groups come to experiences and convictions which are meaningful for them today" (p. 310). "It may be said that God is an educator, for it is in and through an educational process that religion has developed in the race. It is only through such a process that God becomes known or that an experience of God is achieved" (p. 312).

Through his thorough and able handling of the issue and his fair consideration of opposing viewpoints, Professor Elliott has demonstrated that he was the person to write this book. Any further discussion of the issues involved will of necessity take account of this excellent treatment.

PAUL H. VIETH.

Yale Divinity School.

**Preaching from the Bible.** By ANDREW W. BLACKWOOD. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$2.00.

PROBABLY the practice of taking a text for every sermon originated in early ideas of Biblical authority. It was not

the preacher's business to expound his own ideas, but to interpret God's revelation. He took a passage and explained its significance.

But in practice this has not always been fortunate. Long after all pretense of interpreting Scripture in the sermon had disappeared, it was still felt necessary to start with a text, and the use of the Bible which resulted has often been artificial, and at times even comic. It is not surprising that many preachers have largely abandoned the use of texts, since their sermons have not grown out of them, and the sermon has tended to become an essay.

Doctor Blackwood has called us back to an appreciation of the proper place of the Bible in preaching. After having held several important pastorates, he accepted the chair of Homiletics in Princeton Theological Seminary ten years ago, and there he has been able to watch the application of his theories by successive classes of young preachers. His book is supported both by great convictions and by repeated experiments.

We have here no suggestion of the old proof-text method of using the Bible. In fact, "one should think more about what concerns the hearer than about what the passage means." But the author finds in the use of Biblical material an immense enrichment in preaching, and a way of avoiding that monotony of theme and treatment which is a cardinal homiletic weakness.

An opening chapter on "The Preacher's Examples" undertakes to show the dependence of great preachers of the past on the Bible. The sketches are too brief to be very informing, and in some instances, the cases of Spurgeon and Jefferson for example, the preacher is praised almost without reference to the Bible.

The rest of the book illustrates different ways in which the Bible has been used as a basis for sermons. There are suggestions for the biographical sermon, the biographical series on kindred characters, and the series of several sermons built on different phases of one character such as Joseph or Moses. But the biographical analysis and the past tense are avoided as a plague. Biblical characters are an opportunity to preach Christ to living men and women. There are sermons on paragraphs, sermons on chapters, and sermons on whole books.

A large part of the book is given to actual illustrations and outlines of sermons of the different types. The young preacher will find a wealth of suggestion and of sermon outlines, but he will be disappointed if he expects to find sermons which he can "borrow." The many outlines, like baskets, must be filled with his own fruit which he has gathered in the orchard of life if his congregation is to be fed.

In addition to the emphasis on the Bible as a source of preaching material, there are many bits of good homiletic advice scattered through these pages, and interesting suggestions for using the mid-week service for Bible study.

W. A. SMART.

Emory University,  
Emory University, Ga.

**Defense for America.** WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, Editor. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.00.

DOCTOR WHITE, who in his long journalistic career has associated himself with many a crusade, has stepped out in front again in behalf of a cherished cause. As editor of this book he has assembled a noteworthy group of collaborators, including three University presidents—Sey-

mour of Yale, Conant of Harvard, and Graham of North Carolina; three religionists—Doctor Coffin of Union, Father Ryan of Washington, and Rabbi Wise of the Free Synagogue; other editors, authors, a professor, a lawyer, an outstanding woman, Mrs. Dwight Morrow; and the President of the United States (the address of May 16th, 1940, which launched the fever of sentiment that has gripped the nation ever since, and a later fireside chat).

The book is frankly propaganda. The authors were free to express themselves as they believed, the editor states, but no one can doubt that they were picked carefully for their belief that Defense for America comes best through carrying the utmost possible assistance to the allied cause—that is, "short of war," and not unanimously with that limitation.

One's conclusions regarding this or any other matter depend upon the assumptions with which he starts. Some of the assumptions found on these pages are as follows: There are other things worse than war; the end justifies the means; the defeat of the British will obliterate democracy everywhere except in the United States and will endanger it here because we will then be left naked to our enemies commercially (some say), from a military standpoint (others); we can help "short of war" without going the whole length; a British victory will assure democracy; democracy and religion can be defended by resort to arms; pacifism is not worthy of an answer.

All of these assumptions are shared by many Americans and they may be right, but one reviewer, as he read the genuine and impassioned sentiments of these eminent contributors, had to remind himself that with different presuppositions equally good and patriotic men can and do reach different conclusions.

The love of freedom, characteristic of Americans, breathes through each chapter, but one finds here little fear that war itself might destroy that freedom. The book could not have been written earlier than September 1st, 1939. The war has brought to birth most of these convictions, which are defended on the basis of realism. It may be said that peace will make many of these ideas look as ridiculous as the war has made peace ideals at the present time.

The closeness of Europe to America we hear stressed less since Britain's resistance has widened the channel—less than it was when some of these words were winged over the world. I am thinking of this paragraph: "Modern planes starting from the Cape Verde Islands can be over Brazil in seven hours. And Para, Brazil, is but four flying hours to Caracas, Venezuela; and Venezuela is but two and a half hours to Cuba and the Canal Zone; and Cuba and the Canal Zone are two and a quarter hours to Tampico, Mexico; and Tampico is two and a quarter hours to St. Louis, Kansas City and Omaha." So, it would seem, the Cape Verde Islands are a good jumping-off place for attacking the Middle West. But by the same schedule London is less than ten minutes from Dunkerque! And that, it may be said, is a rather sizable distance when invasion is the object.

The extreme war psychosis of some of the papers is represented by this sentence from Father Ryan: "No war can be just on both sides; in some wars both sides may be acting unjustly." To me this is about equivalent to saying that some murders may be unjust. This author quite evidently has forgotten what war is and is thinking only in terms of the ends it claims to seek.

WILLIAM K. ANDERSON.  
Nashville, Tennessee.

**Theology and Modern Life.** Essays in Honor of Dr. Harris Franklin Rall. Edited by PAUL ARTHUR SCHILPP. Chicago: Willett, Clark & Company. \$2.50.

It is a healthy sign for the Church and for Christianity that so many books on theology are coming from the press, showing that religious leaders are addressing themselves seriously to the pressing ethical and spiritual problems of a troubled age. Quite a number of these books have been symposiums. Such a book is this one. It is built around the personality and work of Dr. Harris Franklin Rall of Garrett Biblical Institute. The authors of the various chapters are either former students or friends and colleagues of Doctor Rall. Each man expresses his own opinion, and thus we have a fine variety. But there is also a splendid unity, due to the fact that these men and Doctor Rall are intellectually blood brothers. Presenting in rather brief fashion the impact of high intellectual, ethical and religious ideas and ideals upon the paganism of our day, the book brings refreshment to the spirit of those who read it.

For a quarter of a century Doctor Rall has been a positive force for good on Garrett and Northwestern campus. He has taught the young theologues of a great Church; he is the author of a number of significant and enduring books, and has written many articles and book reviews for magazines and papers. At this time, after a long period of high influence, at the very pinnacle of his powers, and coinciding with the acceptance of his manuscript for the Bross Award, it is opportune that Doctor Schilpp should enlist these eleven, all of them staunch friends of Doctor Rall, in such a laudable undertaking.

Dr. Irl Goldwin Whitchurch, of Garrett, starts the symposium with an in-

teresting biographical chapter, which not only traces the life history of Doctor Rall, but also sets forth his religious and philosophical attitudes. From early life he was rooted in the experiential aspect of religion. But since religion to him always meant life, and must minister to life, the social implication was never absent from his preaching and teaching. Doctor Rall's philosophy of life is deeply grounded in the Hebrew-Christian tradition. Doctor Whitchurch pays a just tribute to the many-sidedness of his fine Christian colleague. He notes the legend concerning Plato, that he used to thank the gods that he was born in the time of Socrates, and adds, "In a similar spirit of gratitude, I am certain that I am but one of a host who will continue to be thankful that we lived in the company of Harris Franklin Rall."

Indicating the breadth of Doctor Rall's sympathies, as well as the breadth of the conception of the book, the editor chose a Jewish theological professor, Dr. Samuel S. Cohon, to contribute a chapter. He writes on "Our Immortality." It is a thoughtful, helpful, and positive putting of a great theme, one of the very best puttings of this subject that we have ever read. Limitations of space prevent comment on all of the chapters, but they are uniformly well written, and while each contributor holds his own opinions and sets forth his own arguments, they are all intellectually and spiritually in warm sympathy with Doctor Rall's general position.

Among the twelve chapters of this excellent book three, in the judgment of this reviewer, stand out. The first is Frederick Clifton Grant's chapter on "The Significance of Critical Study of the Gospels for Religious Thought Today." Very clearly the necessity for Biblical criticism is set forth, and at the end we see that, "Criticism is indispensable for the

understanding of the record, and should be granted its full freedom, as is the right of every legitimate science. But indispensable as it is, criticism is not enough. Only faith can understand and grasp what it is these simple, earnest, primitive Christians are writing about, and living and dying for." The best chapter of all is Bishop Francis John McConnell's on "Facing the Problem of Evil." It is the best and most intellectually respectable and spiritually satisfying statement of this dark subject we ever read. The third noteworthy chapter is Irl Goldwin Whitchurch's on "Interpreting the Religious Situation." In engaging fashion he traces out the various trends and movements of the religious mind of today, both in its highlights and shadows. Truly Kantian in his spirit, Doctor Whitchurch puts morality in the very center of the Christian teachings. The closing paragraph expresses his conclusion: "Since the seventeenth century in the Western world there have developed influential naturalistic interpretations of morality. On that view morality means essentially a body of contractual agreements that have proven expedient under specific conditions of social life. With respect to such a restrictive view of morality Christian faith must move on beyond. The reason is that such a truncated notion of morality falls far short of being morality, not that moral symbols are necessarily defective in relation to religion. Therefore I would like to suggest that a fusion of the ontological accent of Christianity with an adequate conception of morality might yield the very language—yes, and also the consummate experience and life—for which religious faith at its highest reaches has been seeking."

In small scope, and in somewhat restricted fashion, this book is really a survey of the field of Christian theology in Protestantism today. It will bear a care-

ful and studious reading by our ministers, and many a thoughtful layman will greatly profit by the stimulation of mind and soul which it affords. It honors Doctor Rall where he would like to be honored, namely, in bringing men to the fountains of living spiritual waters. Its place in ministers' libraries will clarify much muddy thinking, and lead to some positive preaching values.

SIDNEY A. GUTHRIE.

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**Not To Me Only.** By FRANK CALEB GATES. Princeton University Press.  
\$3.00.

DOCTOR GATES' account of his half century of missionary service in Turkey (1881-1932) is more than a fascinating tale of adventure; it is an illuminating footnote to the current discussion of the aim and character of the missionary movement. Too often the philosophy of missions is argued on theoretical grounds—witness its treatment by both Doctor Kraemer and the Laymen's Commission. Such considerations of theology and comparative religion need to be checked against the actual experience of those who are penetrating non-Christian life with the Christian message.

Here is such an experience. It spanned the five great catastrophes that prostrated modern Turkey—the Armenian massacres, the mass deportations, the Balkan Wars, the first World War, and the exchange of population with Greece. It saw too the miraculous resurrection of the nation under Mustapha Kemal and his successful defiance of the schemes of the Western Powers. All the tangled, dynamic elements of our tense modern world are packed into these years—what did missionary service in the midst of them mean?

It plainly meant for Doctor Gates that *every genuine human need is the concern of the missionary*. His life is a record of constantly expanding areas of service. In his freshman days (the phrase is his own) mission work meant primarily preaching and ministering to local congregations, often under conditions of hardship and danger. This purely religious task was suddenly expanded when the locust plagues of 1885 and the terrible Armenian massacres of a few years later confronted mission workers with thousands of starving villagers. Thus Doctor Gates was drawn into a life-long service of relief administration—a service so recognized that the official orders cabled by London to the first British High Commissioner in Stamboul after the war closed with the injunction, "consult Doctor Gates." With the rise of Mustapha Kemal, a new service was needed. The nationalistic rebirth of Turkey brought her into sharp conflict with the ambitions and plans of the Western Powers; what both East and West needed was a sympathetic interpreter who neither feared the past nor favored its mistakes. How well Doctor Gates filled this role is written in the records of Versailles and Lausanne, in the "Foreign Relations of the United States," and in the diaries of Mrs. Gates, twice buried in the College garden during tense days. How Turkey felt about this unofficial American ambassador was expressed by a Turkish Minister who greeted Doctor Gates, saying, "If you had not come to see me I should have been obliged to come to you to thank you for all that you have done for our people."

All this is *missionary* work because it is serving the need of the nation in the spirit of Christ. Doctor Gates' own expression is, "The primary aim of missionaries was not to change the theology of

the people—a common misinterpretation of their objective—but their lives" (p. 31). Changing life means changing social and political, as well as spiritual conditions.

Another illuminating note that sounds through this missionary experience is the *primary concern of Christian education for the production of character*. First at Mardin and Harput, then for twenty-nine years as President of Robert College in Stamboul, Doctor Gates made the school his approach to the needs of Turkey. What is this "Christian" education to which he gave his life? It was not a mere appendage to evangelism (as in many mission schools) nor a secular transmission of Western technique (as in Government Commissions and Western Foundations); rather it was the use of the best methods and materials of education to build in Turkish youth the patterns of Christian character. "Robert College makes men" is the way the Turkish parent put it. But that "making men" was no simple task—it involved the whole life of the College and the whole life of the boy. Doctor Gates' experience is the story of how the dominating concern to produce men fit for the new day in Turkey shaped itself to the conditions of fanaticism, race hatred, war and nationalism—and emerged triumphant. Although the formal teaching of religion and participation in worship were forbidden by the government of Mustapha Kemal, the College continued to pursue its objective, being challenged by new difficulties to find new instruments for expressing the Christian view of life.

Yet the greatest message of this book is something deeper than either a type of education or a new field of service. It lies in the witness of Doctor Gates' life to the *centrality of the Christian motive and resources in the life of the missionary*.

Critics sometimes talk as though "anybody" could undertake a "social gospel." Let such take the measure of this experience. By what power did a foreigner stay in Turkey through famine, massacre, war and revolution? Where did he find a compassion and understanding broad enough for the needs and problems of men of another faith and culture? When official corruption, popular fanaticism, plague and war wiped out decades of work, how did he find courage to go on and build again? How does it happen that a *missionary* emerged as the chief foreign influence in Turkey? Doctor Gates' own statement is very simple: "above all, I wanted to present Christ and His devotion of Himself to the saving of men" (p. 197). Only such a life commitment was adequate for this demanding experience in Turkey; and only such a commitment is adequate wherever there are great tasks to be undertaken.

JOHN S. BADEAU

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**The Christian Fellowship.** By NELS F. S. FERRÉ. New York: Harper & Brothers. \$2.00.

**Christian Realism in Contemporary American Theology.** A Study of Reinhold Niebuhr, W. M. Horton, and H. P. Van Dusen, Preceded by a General and Historical Survey. By GEORGE HAMMAR. A.-B. Lundquistka Bokhandeln, Uppsala, Sweden.

THE first of these two books is written by a young man whom an American philosopher calls the most promising theologian of his age in this country. It comprises a series of theological essays centering about the idea of the Church.

A note on the first page gently advises readers unused to "concise philosophical"

English to skip the first eighteen pages, but in spite of the note it is to be feared that those pages will prove a wall so high and thick that average readers will not have the courage to pass through or leap over it to the treasures that lie beyond.

The first chapter defines religious (and all other) knowledge as "a social stream out of which each knower gathers information and to which in turn he contributes his individual discoveries." The best test of true knowledge is its "appropriate effectiveness," whereby both its rational consistency and its empirical applicability are measured. The thinker who accepts this test is delivered from the bondage of skepticism, but because the test presupposes that all knowledge is relative, he is led on into the realm of faith where alone the absolute is to be found.

The second chapter asks what it is that establishes the unity and continuity of Christian faith; and the third chapter answers that it is *agape*, God's love for man which produces, when apprehended, the unique fellowship called the Church.

Chapter four is a description of the false and but lately current liberalism which derives from man's pride and of the true liberalism which is part of the freedom of the Christian man.

Chapter five is a plea for the better understanding of the relationship between the Church Catholic, "the unchangeable reality of which it is death to deny," and the Church Corporate, the fallible expression of the former "within the relativities of history's dynamic advance."

The next chapter on symbolism and sacramental theory is what might be called a manifesto of High-Church Congregationalism. It reflects a movement which is today gathering strength in many non-liturgical communions among those who cling to their freedom as zealously as ever but to whom the Christian fellowship

has become so central that "Christ is taken to be particularly present through the sacraments because by means of their symbolic power" the reality of that fellowship is experienced at its fullest.

"Christianity and Karma," Chapter seven, argues that Christian fellowship must learn to express itself in some parts of the world in forms as yet alien to it, adding such as are needed to express its own distinctiveness. "Karma itself can be redeemed, and will be when Indian pessimism is touched by Christian hope."

The final chapter is the best brief comparative study I have seen of the philosophical Fascism of Pareto, the Communism of Marx, the Freudianism of Freud, and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The innumerable flashes of insight in which the book abounds I have not mentioned. These await the reader as his reward.

Professor Ferré is mentioned in the introduction to Doctor Hammar's book as one of several to whom the author is indebted for valuable suggestions in the preparation of this most interesting survey of American theology. Doctor Hammar is a Swedish theologian who visited this country during the winter immediately preceding the outbreak of the present war, on a traveling fellowship provided by the Swedish-American Foundation in Stockholm.

His first chapter is a brief but discerning study of present theological tendencies in the United States. The rise of realism in theology under the leadership of Reinhold Niebuhr and others is sketched within the framework of the idealism of William E. Hocking and the empirical systems of Shailer Mathews, Henry Nelson Wieman, and D. C. Macintosh.

Chapters two and three are devoted to historical backgrounds. Congregationalism, Presbyterianism, Lutheranism, Prot-

estant Episcopalianism, liberalism, as seen in William Adams Brown and Harry Emerson Fosdick—these and other significant phases of American thought are all examined as contributors to the strength and weakness of our contemporary theology.

Chapters four, five, and six are careful studies of the thought of Reinhold Niebuhr, Walter Marshall Horton, and Henry Pitman Van Dusen, in whom the author finds the beginnings of the most significant theology which has emerged in this country in more than a generation. He summarizes his thought as follows:

"Of the three American attempts at theological reconstruction which we have now submitted to study, Reinhold Niebuhr's theology was found to be a fructifying realistic theology, while Horton's theology at most could be termed a semi-realistic theology. (Doctor Hammar has not read Professor Horton's last book.) Van Dusen's theology could be called a pseudo-realistic theology if this term were not so derogatory. It is more just to term Van Dusen's theology a mystical interpretation of religion."

Doctor Hammar sees the American scene through the lenses of a Continental Lutheran. Liberalism, to him, is a synthesis of reason and revelation which leads to the dissolution of the latter. He is pained by the freedom with which Niebuhr and other Americans take up the problem of Christology; he wants not a dialectic but an absolute attitude to Jesus Christ—but here his dogmatism would seem to be a synthesis of reason and revelation which results in the dissolution of reason. Corrected for this personal equation, this essay is a phenomenally brilliant piece of writing.

DOUGLAS HORTON.  
The General Council of  
The Congregational Christian Churches.

What Is Christianity? (The Lyman Beecher Lectures for 1939 at Yale University.) By CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON. Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company. \$3.00.

DOCTOR MORRISON has given us a work of unquestioned originality, notable discernment and great importance. Contending that most historic definitions of Christianity have gone wrong through undue simplification, he disclaims "any intention of defining Christianity in terms of its 'essence'." Rather, he aims to "define it as a phenomenon." Two convictions he finds characteristic of Christianity in its varied manifestations—God has revealed Himself to man; His self-revelation has been made in history. These recognitions yield this definition:

"Christianity is the revelation of God in history. . . . The Christian Church is that revelation. . . . By the Christian Church, I mean that particular human community whose historical continuum extends as far back as the beginnings of the Hebrew people, a community which first emerged in history as an exclusive racial community, which passed, in the immediate presence of Jesus of Nazareth and by virtue of His life and work, into a community of the remnant of Israel, and which finally became the superracial and inclusive community which we know specifically as the Christian Church."

This central contention is supported by a basic presupposition and an historical analysis; it issues in certain definite conclusions and proposals with special bearing upon Christian unity. The presupposition is that God's self-disclosure is never by a truth uttered but by creative activity, and that this activity occurs not primarily in events or individuals but in a living, ongoing community. The historical analysis discovers three successive epochs in the formation of the Christian

community as the medium of the divine revelation—the preparation in Israel before Christ, Jesus' training of His intimate followers ("the Church of the Remnant"), and the development of "the Body of Christ" since Pentecost. Christianity's current feebleness is due to unfaithfulness to its inherent nature as a divinely appointed community. Roman Catholicism is guilty of "the great apostasy" in substituting a part of the Christian community, the hierarchy, for the community in its entirety as the bearer of revelation and salvation. Protestantism is guilty of heresy in transferring the locus of both revelation and salvation altogether outside the Christian community—revelation to the Bible and salvation to the inner life of the individual. The result is the present divided, ineffective and pitiable state of Christendom. Prerequisite to a revitalization of Christian influence and a realization of Christian unity is a "restoration of the Body of Christ," that is, a recovery not merely in recognition but in manifold practice of the Church as the total community which is oriented toward God through Christ.

This book, like many others, offers a single major thesis which it is concerned above all else to establish, and a number of subsidiary arguments in greater or less measure relevant to the main concern. Criticism will fall principally on one or another of the secondary themes. For example, Doctor Morrison is least happy in his reading of the events of history. Each in the long sequence of historical generalizations embraces important and neglected truth; but the presentation is usually so one-sided as to lay the author open to attack from those who are eager to dissent. Thus there is danger lest vulnerability in nonessentials may weaken the impact of the major contention. That contention is that the divine revelation to men must occur within the normal proc-

esses of history, and that in this disclosure the Judaistic-Christian community has played a unique and determinative role. In this major thesis, the author establishes an essentially sound and a basic truth. The main argument suffers from vagueness at two connected and crucial points. One concerns the relation of God to historic reality. Of the two key terms—revelation and history—the latter is subjected to thorough and acute analysis. No such clarity illuminates the concept of revelation, that is, the precise fashion in which the divine effects self-disclosure through the continuum of a historic community. One gets the impression that the divine activity is conceived to pervade and interpenetrate and mold mankind's life in some impersonal fashion, perhaps rather as the sunshine works its healing influence upon physical well-being. Doctor Morrison is greatly indebted to concepts of "organisms" especially as exploited by Professors Whitehead and Wieman; they have brought liberation from the strait-jacket of mechanism on the one hand and from the abstractions of radical individualism on the other hand. But the categories of organism, derived from biology, are inadequate to account for the relations of persons to persons. How much less adequate are they to describe the relation of the divine reality to persons! Positively, the disclosure of God to men must take place *within* history, but it must occur supremely *to* and *through* individual persons who are history's climactic concretions.

Parenthetically, a parallel ambiguity in handling the issues of transcendence and immanence may be noted. The reality of the superhuman and the transcendent are recognized, but the superhistorical and the supernatural are denied. It is a little difficult to comprehend how the "transcendent creativity of God" can operate within nature without being in some sense

supernatural or function in the continuum of history without being superhistorical.

The second major inadequacy of the argument concerns the relation of event to continuum in history, of individual persons to community. Doctor Morrison is concerned to insist, quite rightly, that there is no such thing as an individual event or person apart from the historic continuum in which it occurs. But this insistence leads to an interpretation of the prophetic consciousness which strains credibility. "The developing theology (of the prophets) was . . . but a development of the ideology with which *the community* interpreted and appropriated the revelation. . . . Their *corporate historical experience* compelled them to develop their *corporate ideology* in harmony with their given faith that God had chosen this particular historical community in which to reveal himself" (italics mine). But the distinctive mark of the prophetic conviction is that while it develops *within* a corporate experience, it speaks in reaction from and radical contradiction to the prevailing corporate ideology. In brief, it cannot be fully accounted for solely in terms of the immanent movement of divine activity through the existing community, but only in terms of a more immediate self-disclosure of the divine to

individuals as they stand within the historic community as at once its products, its rebels, its saviours. As we have just said, the disclosure of God to men must take place *within* history, but it must occur supremely *to* and *through* individual persons who are history's climactic concretions. Inevitably, one-sidedness here renders unconvincing the ascription of supreme authority to Jesus which the writer's normative definition implies.

Doctor Morrison's thought at this point is under command of two partly contradictory motives—the determination to establish the formative significance of community and the desire to deny the intervention of radical miracle into history. An exaggerated development of the first concern has deprived him of the only principle by which he might have been made secure in the latter.

These comments require important modifications of the main thesis, but not its abandonment. It embraces and bodies forth with inescapable power an insight of major importance. *What is Christianity?* is not only one of the most provocative but one of the most enriching and challenging books of recent decades.

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## Bookish Brevities

It was doubtless a surprise to many to learn that the real name of John Oxenham was William Arthur Dunkerley. Those who loved his poems, however, will always remember him by his happily chosen nom de plume.

In these days, when Oxenham's beloved England is so fiercely lighted by incendiary bombs, one is reminded of his reverent poem beginning,

"Kneel always when you light a fire!"

A most revealing booklet—*Handbook: Material on Migrants*—has been prepared through the Council of Women for Home Missions, The Interdenominational Body of 23 Women's Home Mission Boards. In its pages the migrants speak for themselves. We quote: "Where was I borned? Where was I borned? Oh—I was borned in tomatoes. My little brother Tommy was borned in prunes." With Jimmy—five years old—life is "just one crop after another."

William Lyon Phelps has said that "One difference between a book of science and one of poetry is that a book of poetry is sought in its first edition and a book of science in its latest." He adds, "If Charles Darwin were alive today, he would want to revise every chapter of his *Origin of Species* before he would allow it to go into another edition, while his contemporary, Charles Dickens, would have to revise nothing in his books to put them in line with the truth."

In a somewhat recent list of books eminent in European literature, only

those authors were named who have been canonized by time. A comment upon this was to the effect that neglect of the classics would lead to a degeneration of literature, and further, that time plays tricks upon critics and authors and that to look back at past glories is safer than to praise the contemporary effort.

A little over a hundred years ago, a public meeting was held at the Free-mason's Tavern in support of the founding of the London Library, Thomas Carlyle being among the speakers.

"A good book [said Carlyle] is the purest essence of a human soul. . . . The founding of a library is one of the greatest things we can do with regard to results. It is one of the quietest of things; but there is nothing that I know of at bottom more important. . . . A collection of books is the best of all universities; for the university only teaches us how to read the book; you must go to the book itself for what it is. I call it a Church also . . . which every devout soul may enter—a Church but with no quarreling, no Church-rates. . . ."

"The remainder of the sentence," says the reporter, "was drowned in cheers and laughter, in the midst of which Mr. Carlyle sat down."

The announcement of the sale of the library of the late A. Edward Newton will be of surpassing interest to bibliophiles everywhere. Naturally this famous collection contains many items of special interest, outstanding among which is an

autographed sonnet by John Keats called "A Dream After Reading Dante's Episode of Paolo and Francesca." It was written in the first of three volumes of Cary's *Dante, 1814*, which Keats gave to Fanny Brawne in 1819 after he had marked passages for her attention. He drew his monogram on the flyleaf of the second volume and inscribed her initials on the flyleaf of the third. In Fanny's handwriting the first line of his last sonnet appears on another flyleaf of the first volume.

In selling this library in parts and at auction, Mr. Newton's son says: "Father felt that one of the outstanding joys he had through life was that connected with 'the hunt.' He many times expressly stated that he wanted to give other book-lovers the same opportunity he himself had so enjoyed."

F. W. Boreham, the prolific and popular writer of Australia, whose books are well known in the United States, has recently written the story of his life, entitling it *My Pilgrimage*. The following lines, taken from the Introduction, reveal not only the character of the man, but that quality in his writing which made thousands of readers always eager for a new Boreham book. "After all, every life, however commonplace, has its purple patches, its stupendous thrills, its surges of wild romance, its golden dreams, its excruciating heartbreak, its crimson bloodstains and its stream of tears. The gorgeous epic of universal history is reflected, as in an exquisite cameo, in the secret soul of every crossing-sweeper. I therefore venture. If I achieve nothing else, I shall at least have borne grateful and reverent witness to the goodness and

mercy that have followed me all the days of my life, and to the sweetness and splendor of those companionships that have made a pilgrim track glow like a pathway of roses."

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For many years the Epworth Press (London) has been publishing books uplifting in character and helpful in content. It seems almost unbelievable that they should continue to come across the ocean from a city so cruelly beset. But come they do—messengers of high hope to a world in need.

Among the most recent are several brochures, three of them by schoolmen: *The Christian and Education*, by W. G. Humphrey, Headmaster of The Leys School in Cambridge; *Nurseries of Christians*, A Call for Christian Schools, by John W. Skinner, Headmaster of Culford School, and *A Boy's Right to Religion*, A Schoolmaster's Appeal to Parents, by Conrad Skinner, Chaplain of The Leys School. Two new titles in the series of "Wayside Books" are: *God's Troubadour*, *The Devotional Verse of George MacDonald*, and *God Signs His Name, Gleanings from the Devotional Writings of William Robertson Nicoll*. Both of these books were compiled by Harry Escott.

There are those who will remember the sermons and addresses of Nicoll, as they appeared in the *British Weekly*. Doctor Parker called them the "weekly loaf" of the preacher and Christian worker. Of MacDonald it has been said that "He always found the vision of God in experiences by the wayside of life." And so, of this little book: "The Christian Pilgrim, going through the darkness of a spiritual blackout today, will be cheered and strengthened by its content."